This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

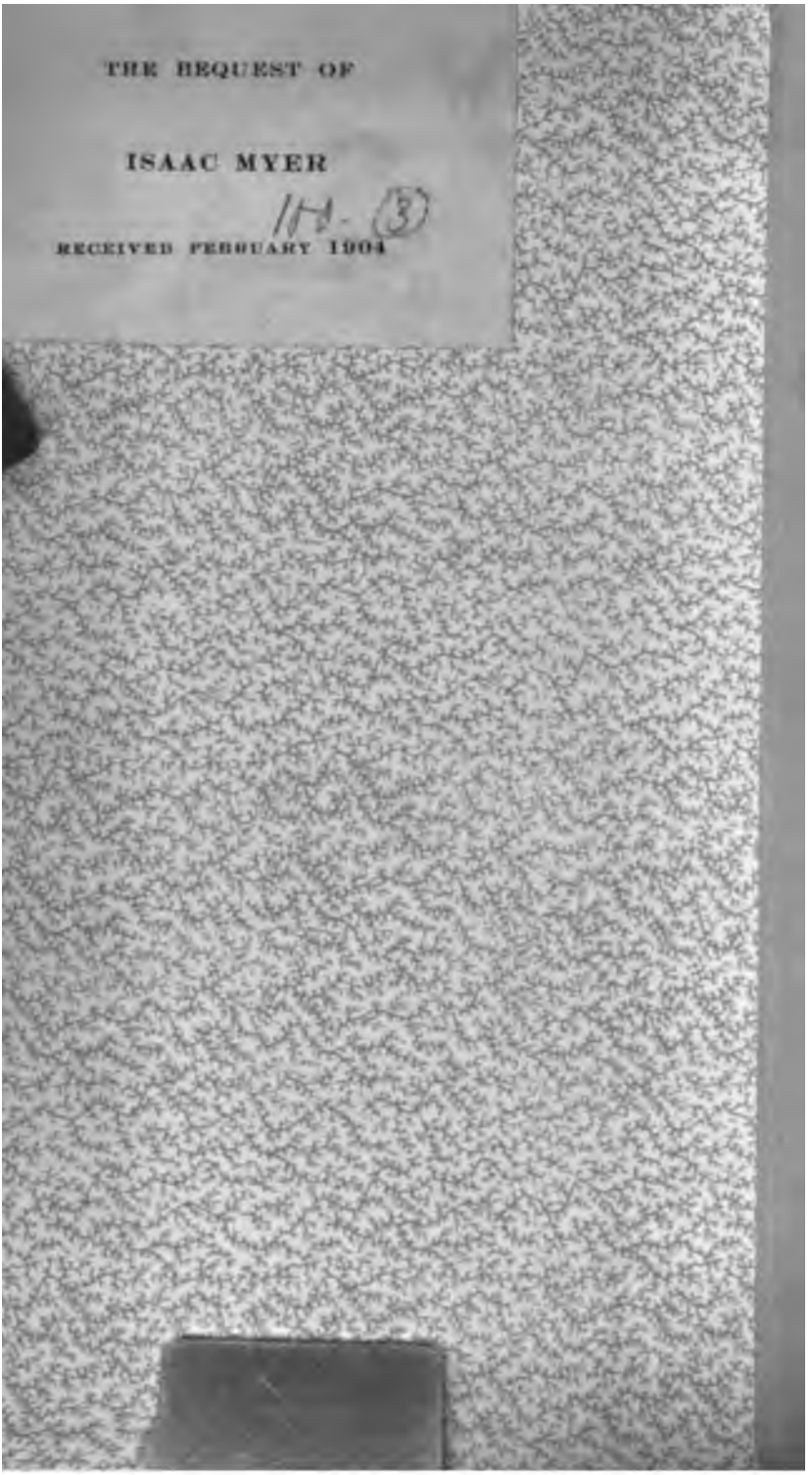
NYPL RESEARCH LIBRARIES
3433 06729094 4

THE BEQUEST OF

ISAAC MYER

1H. (3)

RECEIVED FEBRUARY 1904



SAMUEL JOHNSON LL.D.

THE

WORKS

OF

Samuel Johnſon, LL. D.

TOGETHER WITH

HIS LIFE,

AND

NOTES ON HIS LIVES OF THE POETS,

By Sir JOHN HAWKINS, Knt.

IN ELEVEN VOLUMES.

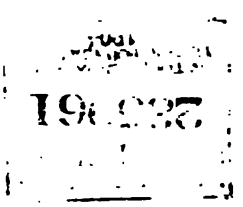
VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for J. Buckland, J. Rivington and Sons, T. Payne and Sons, L. Davis, B. White and Son, T. Longman, B. Law, J. Dodſley, H. Baldwin, J. Robſon, J. Johnſon, C. Dilly, T. Vernor, W. Nicoll, G. G. J. and J. Robinſon, T. Cadell, T. Carnan, J. Nichols, J. Bew, R. Baldwin, N. Conant, P. Elmſly, W. Goldſmith, J. Knox, R. Faulder, Leigh and Sotheby, G. Nicol, J. Murray, A. Strahan, W. Lowndes, T. Evans, W. Bent, S. Hayes, G. and T. Wilkie, T. and J. Egerton, W. Fox, P. M'Queen, D. Ogilvie, B. Collins, E. Newbery, and R. Jameſon.

MDCCLXXXVII.

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY



TO

GEORGE THE THIRD,

KING OF GREAT-BRITAIN, &c.

THESE VOLUMES,

THE WORKS OF AN AUTHOR

WHOM HIS MAJESTY's BOUNTY RAISED

FROM A STATE OF INDIGENCE

TO THE ENJOYMENT OF LEARNED LEISURE,

AND AN EXEMPTION FROM WORLDLY SOLICITUDE,

ARE,

WITH THE MOST PROFOUND VENERATION,

INSCRIBED,

BY

HIS MAJESTY's DUTIFUL SUBJECT

AND MOST DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE EDITOR.

NEW YORK
PUBLIC
LIBRARY

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Author of the ſeveral pieces contained in the enſuing Volumes, had meditated a complete edition of his Works, but had made ſmall progreſs in his deſign even a few months before his deceaſe, when his infirmities obliged him to abandon it. By certain papers, however, that came to my hands, he had ſo far aſcertained the particulars of his intended publication as to enable me to carry his purpoſe into execution.

Thus informed, I have, at the requeſt of ſome of his friends, taken upon myſelf the office of his Editor, and accordingly here preſent to view as complete a collection of the various writings of Dr. Samuel Johnſon as I was able to form, and the directions he left behind him would permit me to publiſh.

As

As I ſtood engaged, by a promiſe made to him a ſhort time before his deceaſe, to be as well the guardian of his fame as an executor of his will, I thought I could no way better diſcharge the former of theſe obligations than by giving to the world a ſuccinct narration of the principal events of his life, interſperſed with ſuch particulars as beſt ſerved to delineate and illuſtrate his character; in the performance of which taſk, having endeavoured with equal care to avoid the extremes of praiſe and blame, I truſt to the charity, the gratitude, and the juſtice of impartial poſterity, that the failings of a man whoſe whole life was a conflict with pain and adverſity, will either be forgiven or forgotten, and that the remembrance of his virtues, and a reverence for the wonderful endowments of his mind, and his zeal in the employment of them to the beſt purpoſes, will be coeval with thoſe excellent leſſons of religion, morality, and œconomical wiſdom, which he has left behind him.

In the Lives of the Poets I have inſerted notes that contain either additional facts, or that tend to explain particular paſſages. The paucity of anecdotes in this part of the Author's writings, it is preſumed, will juſtify this liberty, it being a known

part

part of his character, that he was more ingenious in critical diſquiſition than induſtrious in collecting memoirs; ſo that, in many inſtances, what he calls the life of a poet may more properly be termed an examen of his works.

Of the Latin pieces in the laſt of theſe volumes, many were compoſed in thoſe intervals of eaſe, which during his laſt illneſs he at times experienced: others, and thoſe the greater number, were the employment of his thoughts, when, being retired to reſt, the powers of ſleep failed him, when the remiſſion of pain became to him poſitive pleaſure, and having no outward objects preſent to his view, his ever-active imagination had liberty to wander through the boundleſs regions of fancy, and his reaſon to inveſtigate the moſt important and ſublime truths. The originals, as they were from time to time committed to writing, were by him delivered to Mr. Langton, with directions to publiſh them; and it is to that gentleman that we owe the pleaſure of peruſing, in this form, theſe the moſt recent effuſions of his genius, and lateſt evidences of his piety.

Beſides the Pieces contained in the enſuing Volumes, there is extant, of Dr. Johnſon's writing,

a ſmall volume, entitled " Prayers and Meditations," *the profits whereof he directed to be employed for a charitable purpoſe, mentioned in the preface thereto. That they are not included in this edition of his Works, will therefore need no apology.*

J. H.

THE

LIFE

OF

Dr. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

THE general ſenſe of mankind, and the practice of the learned in all ages, have given a ſanction to biographical hiſtory, and concurred to recommend that precept of the wiſe ſon of Sirach, in which we are exhorted to 'praiſe famous men, ſuch as by their counſels and by their knowledge of learning were meet for the people,—and were wiſe and eloquent in their inſtructions,—and ſuch as recited verſes in writing*.' In each of theſe faculties did the perſon, whoſe hiſtory I am about to write, ſo greatly excel, that, except for my preſumption in the attempt to diſplay his worth, the undertaking may be thought to need no apology; eſpecially if we contemplate, together with his mental endowments, thoſe moral qualities which diſtinguiſhed him, and reflect that, in an age when literary acquiſitions and

* Eccluſ. Chap. XLIV. Verſe 1, et ſeqq.

ſcientific improvements are rated at their utmoſt value, he reſted not in the applauſe which theſe procured him; but adorned the character of a ſcholar and a philoſopher with that of a chriſtian.

Juſtified, as I truſt, thus far in the opinion of the reader, I may, nevertheleſs, ſtand in need of his excuſe; for that, in the narration of facts that reſpect others, I have oftener ſpoke of myſelf, and in my own perſon, than the practice of ſome writers will warrant. To this objection, if any ſhall pleaſe to make it, I anſwer, that the reverſe of wrong is not always right. By the office I have undertaken I ſtand engaged to relate facts to which I was a witneſs, converſations in which I was a party, and to record memorable ſayings uttered only to myſelf. Whoever attends to theſe circumſtances, muſt, beſides the diſguſt which ſuch an affectation of humility would excite, be convinced, that in ſome inſtances, the avoiding of egotiſms had been extremely difficult, and in many impoſſible.

SAMUEL JOHNSON, the ſubject of the following memoirs, was the elder of the two ſons of Michael Johnſon, of the city of Lichfield bookſeller, and of Sarah his wife, a ſiſter of Dr. Joſeph Ford, a phyſician of great eminence, and father of the famous Cornelius otherwiſe called Parſon Ford.* He was born, as I find

* Of this perſon, who yet lives in the remembrance of a few of his aſſociates, little can be related but from oral tradition. He was, as I have heard Johnſon ſay, a man of great wit and ſtupendous parts, but of very profligate manners. He was chaplain to Lord Chesterfield during his reſidence at the Hague; but, as his lordſhip was

find it noted in his diary, on the ſeventh day of September, 1709: his brother, named Nathanael, was born ſome years after. Mr. Johnſon was a man of eminence in his trade, and of ſuch reputation in the city abovementioned, that he, more than once, bore, for a year, the office of bailiff or chief magiſtrate thereof, and diſcharged the duties of that exalted ſtation with honour and applauſe. It may here be proper, as it will account for ſome particulars reſpecting the character of his ſon Samuel, to mention, that his political principles led him to favour the pretenſions of the exiled family, and that though a very honeſt and ſenſible man, he, like many others inhabiting the county of Stafford, was a Jacobite.

It may farther be ſuppoſed, that he was poſſeſſed of ſome amiable qualities either moral or perſonal, from a circumſtance in his early life, of which evidence is yet remaining. While he was an apprentice at Leek in Staffordſhire, a young woman of the ſame town fell in love with him, and upon his removal to Lichfield followed him, and took lodgings oppoſite his houſe. Her paſſion was not unknown to Mr. Johnſon, but he had no inclination to return it, till he heard that it ſo affected her mind that her life was in danger, when he viſited her, and made her a tender of his hand, but feeling the approach of death, ſhe declined it, and ſhortly after died, and was interred in Lichfield cathedral. In pity

was uſed to tell him, precluded all hope of preferment by the want of a vice, namely, hypocriſy. It was ſuppoſed that the parſon in Hogarth's modern midnight converſation, was intended to repreſent him in his hour of feſtivity, four in the morning.

to her ſufferings, Mr. Johnſon cauſed a ſtone to be placed over her grave with this inſcription:

Here lies the body of
Mrs. ELIZABETH BLANEY, a ſtranger.
She departed this life,
2d of September, 1694.

The firſt born child of Mr. Johnſon and his wife, their ſon Samuel, had the misfortune to receive, together with its nutriment derived from a hired nurſe, the ſeeds of that diſeaſe which troubled him through life, the ſtruma, or, as it is called, the king's-evil; for the cure whereof his mother, agreeable to the opinion then entertained of the efficacy of the royal touch, preſented him to Queen Anne, who, for the laſt time, as it is ſaid, that ſhe ever performed that office, with her accuſtomed grace and benignity adminiſtered to the child as much of that healing quality as it was in her power to diſpenſe, and hung about his neck the uſual amulet of an angel of gold, with the impreſs of St. Michael the archangel on the one ſide, and a ſhip under full ſail on the other.* It was probably this

* This healing gift is ſaid to have been derived to our princes from Edward the Confeſſor, and is recorded by his hiſtorian, Alured Rivallenſis. In Stow's annals we have a relation of the firſt cure of this kind which Edward performed; but, as it is rather diſguſting to read it, I chuſe to give it in the words of the author from whence it is apparently taken, with this remark, that the kings of France lay claim to the ſame miraculous power. 'Adoleſcentula quædam tradita 'nuptiis duplici laborabat incommodo. Nam faciem ejus morbus de-'formaverat, amorem viri ſterilitas prolis ademerat: ſub faucibus 'quippe quaſi glandes ei ſuccreverant, quæ totam faciem deformi tu-'more fœdantes, putrefactis ſub cute humoribus, ſanguinem in ſaniem

'verterant,

It may ſeem a ridiculous attempt to trace the dawn of his poetical faculty ſo far back as to his very infancy; but the following incident I am compelled to mention, as it is well atteſted, and therefore makes part of his hiſtory. When he was about three years old, his mother had a brood of eleven ducklings, which ſhe permitted him to call his own. It happened that in playing about he trod on and killed one of them, upon which running to his mother, he, in great emotion bid her write. Write, child? ſaid ſhe, what muſt I write? Why write, anſwered he, ſo:

Here lies good Maſter Duck,
That Samuel Johnſon trod on,
If't had liv'd 'twould have been good luck,
For then there'd been an odd one.

and ſhe wrote accordingly.

Being arrived at a proper age for grammatical inſtruction, he was placed in the free ſchool of Lichfield, of which Mr. Hunter was then maſter. The progreſs he made in his learning ſoon attracted the notice of his teachers; and among other diſcernible qualities that diſtinguiſhed him from the reſt of the ſchool, he was bold, active and enterpriſing, ſo that without affecting it, the ſeniors in the ſchool looked on him as their head and leader, and readily acquieſced in whatever he propoſed or did. There dwelt at Lichfield a gentleman of the name of Butt, the father of the reverend Mr. Butt, now a King's Chaplain, to whoſe houſe on holidays and in ſchool-vacations he was ever welcome. The children in the family, perhaps offended with the rudeneſs of his behaviour, would frequently call him the great boy, which the father once overhearing, ſaid,

'you

'you call him the great boy, but take my word for it, 'he will one day prove a great man.'

A more particular character of him while a ſchool-boy, and of his behaviour at ſchool, I find in a paper now before me, written by a perſon yet living, and of which the following is a copy:

'Johnſon and I were, early in life, ſchool-fellows at 'Lichfield, and for many years in the ſame claſs. As 'his uncommon abilities for learning far exceeded us, 'we endeavoured by every boyiſh piece of flattery to 'gain his aſſiſtance; and three of us, by turns, uſed to 'call on him in a morning, on one of whoſe backs, 'ſupported by the other two, he rode triumphantly 'to ſchool. He never aſſociated with us in any of 'our diverſions, except in the winter when the ice was 'firm, to be drawn along by a boy bare-footed. His 'ambition to excel was great, though his application 'to books, as far as it appeared, was very trifling. I 'could not oblige him more than by ſauntering away 'every vacation, that occurred, in the fields, during 'which time he was more engaged in talking to him-'ſelf than his companion. Verſes or themes he would 'dictate to his favourites, but he would never be at 'the trouble of writing them. His diſlike to buſineſs 'was ſo great, that he would procraſtinate his exer-'ciſes to the laſt hour. I have known him after a 'long vacation, in which we were rather ſeverely 'taſked, return to ſchool an hour earlier in the morn-'ing, and begin one of his exerciſes, in which he pur-'poſely left ſome faults, in order to gain time to finiſh 'the reſt.

'I never knew him corrected at ſchool, unleſs it 'was for talking and diverting other boys from their

'buſineſs, by which, perhaps, he might hope to keep 'his aſcendancy. He was uncommonly inquiſitive, 'and his memory ſo tenacious, that whatever he read 'or heard he never forgot. I remember rehearſing 'to him eighteen verſes, which after a little pauſe he 'repeated verbatim, except one epithet, which im-'proved the line.

'After a long abſence from Lichfield, when he re-'turned I was apprehenſive of ſomething wrong in his 'conſtitution, which might either impair his intellect 'or endanger his life, but, thanks to Almighty God, 'my fears have proved falſe.'

In the autumn of the year 1725, he received an invitation from his uncle, Cornelius Ford, to ſpend a few days with him at his houſe, which I conjecture to have been on a living of his in one of the counties bordering upon Staffordſhire; but it ſeems that the uncle, diſcovering that the boy was poſſeſſed of uncommon parts, was unwilling to let him return, and to make up for the loſs he might ſuſtain by his abſence from ſchool, became his inſtructor in the claſſics, and farther aſſiſted him in his ſtudies; ſo that it was not till the Whitſuntide following, that Johnſon went back to Lichfield. Whether Mr. Hunter was diſpleaſed to find a viſit of a few days protracted into a vacation of many months, or that he reſented the interference of another perſon in the tuition of one of his ſcholars, and he one of the moſt promiſing of any under his care, cannot now be known; but, it ſeems, that at Johnſon's return to Lichfield, he was not received into the ſchool of that city; on the contrary, I am informed, by a perſon who was his ſchool-fellow there, that he was placed in one at Stourbridge in Worceſterſhire, under the care of a maſter named Winkworth,

but who, affecting to be thought allied to the Strafford family, aſſumed the name of Wentworth.

When his ſchool education was finiſhed, his father, whoſe circumſtances were far from affluent, was for ſome time at a loſs how to diſpoſe of him: he took him home, probably with a view to bring him up to his own trade; for I have heard Johnſon ſay, that he himſelf was able to bind a book. This ſuſpenſe continued about two years, at the end whereof, a neighbouring gentleman, Mr. Andrew Corbet, having a ſon, who had been educated in the ſame ſchool with Johnſon, whom he was about to ſend to Pembroke college in Oxford, a propoſal was made and accepted, that Johnſon ſhould attend this ſon thither, in quality of aſſiſtant in his ſtudies; and accordingly, on the 31ſt day of October, 1728, they were both entered, Corbet as a gentleman-commoner, and Johnſon as a commoner.

The college tutor, at that time, was a man named Jordan, whom Johnſon, though he loved him for the goodneſs of his nature, ſo contemned for the meanneſs of his abilities, that he would oftener riſque the payment of a ſmall fine than attend his lectures; nor was he ſtudious to conceal the reaſon of his abſence. Upon occaſion of one ſuch impoſition, he ſaid to Jordan, 'Sir, you have ſconced me two-pence for non-'attendance at a lecture not worth a penny.'

Whether it was this diſcouragement in the outſet of their ſtudies, or any other ground of diſinclination that moved him to it, is not known, but this is certain, that young Corbet could not brook ſubmiſſion to a man who ſeemed to be little more learned than himſelf, and that

that having a father living, who was able to diſpoſe of him in various other ways, he, after about two years ſtay, left the college, and went home.

But the caſe of Johnſon was far different: his fortunes were at ſea; his title to a ſtipend was gone, and all that he could obtain from the father of Mr. Corbet, was, an agreement, during his continuance at college, to pay for his commons. With no exhibition, or other means of ſupport in the proſecution of his ſtudies, he had nothing to depend on, ſave the aſſiſtance of a kind and indulgent parent. At that time the trade of a country bookſeller, even in a city where was a cathedral and an incorporation of eccleſiaſtics, was leſs profitable than it is now; for though it may be ſaid, that during the reign of Queen Anne, multitudes of controverſial books and pamphlets were publiſhing, yet theſe yielded but ſmall advantage to the mere venders of them: there were then no ſuch publications for the mere amuſement of young readers or idle perſons as the preſs now daily ſends forth; nor had any bookſeller entertained in his mind the project of a circulating library: from hence it is evident, that his father, having no other means of ſubſiſting himſelf and his children, than the ordinary income of his ſhop, was but little able to afford him any other than a ſcanty maintenance.

The want of that aſſiſtance, which ſcholars in general derive from their parents, relations, and friends, ſoon became viſible in the garb and appearance of Johnſon, which, though in ſome degree concealed by a ſcholar's gown, and that we know is never deemed the leſs honourable for being old, was ſo apparent as to excite

excite pity in ſome that ſaw and noticed him. Shall I be particular, and relate a circumſtance of his diſtreſs, that cannot be imputed to him as an effect of his own extravagance or irregularity, and conſequently reflects no diſgrace on his memory? He had ſcarce any change of raiment, and, in a ſhort time after Corbet left him, but one pair of ſhoes, and thoſe ſo old, that his feet were ſeen through them: a gentleman of his college, the father of an eminent clergyman now living, directed a ſervitor one morning to place a new pair at the door of Johnſon's chamber, who, ſeeing them upon his firſt going out, ſo far forgot himſelf and the ſpirit that muſt have actuated his unknown benefactor, that, with all the indignation of an inſulted man, he threw them away.

He may be ſuppoſed to have been under the age of twenty, when this imaginary indignity was offered him, a period of life at which, ſo far as concerns the knowledge of mankind, and the means of improving adverſe circumſtances, every one has much to learn: he had, doubtleſs, before this time, experienced 'the proud 'man's contumely;' and in this ſchool of affliction might have firſt had reaſon to ſay,—

'Slow riſes worth by poverty depreſt.'

his ſpirit was, nevertheleſs, too great to ſink under this depreſſion. His tutor, Jordan, in about a year's ſpace, went off to a living which he had been preſented to, upon giving a bond to reſign it in favour of a minor, and Johnſon became the pupil of Mr. Adams, a perſon of far ſuperior endowments, who afterwards attained a doctor's degree, and is at this time head of his college. Encouraged, by a change ſo propitious to his ſtudies,

ſtudies, he proſecuted them with diligence, attended both public and private lectures, performed his exerciſes with alacrity, and in ſhort, neglected no means or opportunities of improvement. He had at this time a great emulation, to call it by no worſe a name, to excel his competitors in literature. There was a young gentleman of his college, named Meekes, whoſe exerciſes he could not bear to hear commended; and whenever he declaimed or diſputed in the hall, Johnſon would retire to the fartheſt corner thereof, that he might be out of the reach of his voice.

In this courſe of learning, his favourite objects were claſſical literature, ethics, and theology, in the latter whereof he laid the foundation by ſtudying the Fathers. If we may judge from the magnitude of his Adverſaria, which I have now by me, his plan for ſtudy was a very extenſive one. The heads of ſcience, to the extent of ſix folio volumes, are copiouſly branched throughout it; but, as is generally the caſe with young ſtudents, the blank far exceed in number the written leaves.

To ſay the truth, the courſe of his ſtudies was far from regular: he read by fits and ſtarts, and, in the intervals, digeſted his reading by meditation, to which he was ever prone. Neither did he regard the hours of ſtudy, farther than the diſcipline of the college compelled him. It was the practice in his time, for a ſervitor, by order of the maſter, to go round to the rooms of the young men, and knocking at the door, to enquire if they were within, and, if no anſwer was returned, to report them abſent: Johnſon could not endure this intruſion, and would frequently be ſilent, when the utterance of a word would have inſured him from cenſure;

ſure; and, farther to be revenged for being diſturbed when he was as profitably employed as perhaps he could be, would join with others of the young men in the college in hunting, as they called it, the ſervitor, who was thus diligent in his duty; and this they did with the noiſe of pots and candleſticks, ſinging to the tune of Chevy-chace, the words in that old ballad,

'To drive the deer with hound and horn,' &c.

not ſeldom to the endangering the life and limbs of the unfortunate victim.

Theſe, and other ſuch levities, marked his behaviour for a ſhort time after his coming to college; but he ſoon convinced thoſe about him, that he came thither for other purpoſes than to make ſport either for himſelf or them. His exerciſes were applauded, and his tutor was not ſo ſhallow a man, but that he could diſcover in Johnſon great ſkill in the claſſics, and alſo a talent for Latin verſification, by ſuch compoſitions as few of his ſtanding could equal. Mr. Jordan taking advantage, therefore, of a tranſgreſſion of this his pupil, the abſenting himſelf from early prayers, impoſed on him for a vacation exerciſe, the taſk of tranſlating into Latin verſe the Meſſiah of Mr. Pope, which being ſhewn to the author of the original, by a ſon of Dr. Arbuthnot, then a gentleman-commoner of Chriſt-church, and brother of the late Mr. Arbuthnot of the Exchequer-office, was read, and returned with this encomium: 'The 'writer of this poem will leave it a queſtion for poſte-'rity, whether his or mine be the original.'* This tranſlation

* Mr. Pope, in another inſtance, gave a proof of his candor and diſpoſition to encourage the eſſays of young men of genius. When Smart publiſhed his Latin tranſlation of Mr. Pope's ode on St. Ceci-

lia's

tranſlation found its way into a miſcellany publiſhed by ſubſcription at Oxford, in the year 1731, under the name of J. Huſbands.

He had but little reliſh for mathematical learning, and was content with ſuch a degree of knowledge in phyſics, as he could not but acquire in the ordinary exerciſes of the place: his fortunes and circumſtances had determined him to no particular courſe of ſtudy, and were ſuch as ſeemed to exclude him from every one of the learned profeſſions. He, more than once, ſignified to a friend who had been educated at the ſame ſchool with him, then at Chriſt-church, and intended for the bar, an inclination to the practice of the civil or the common law; the former of theſe required a long courſe of academical inſtitution, and how to ſucceed in the latter, he had not learned;* but his father's inability to ſupport him checked

lia's day, Mr. Pope having read it, in a letter to Newbery the publiſher of it returned his thanks to the author, with an aſſurance, that it exceeded his own original. This fact Newbery himſelf told me, and offered to ſhew me the letter in Mr. Pope's hand-writing.

* In the two profeſſions of the civil and common law, a notable difference is diſcernible: the former admits ſuch only as have had the previous qualification of an univerſity education; the latter receives all whoſe broken fortunes drive, or a confidence in their abilities tempts to ſeek a maintenance in it. Men of low extraction, domeſtic ſervants, and clerks to eminent lawyers, have become ſpecial pleaders and advocates; and, by an unreſtrained abuſe of the liberty of ſpeech, have acquired popularity and wealth. A remarkable inſtance of this kind occurs in the account of a famous lawyer of the laſt century, lord chief juſtice Saunders, as exhibited in the life of the lord keeper Guilford, Page 223.

' He was at firſt no better than a poor beggar boy, if not a pariſh ' foundling, without known parents or relations. He had found ' a way

checked theſe wiſhes, and left him to ſeek the means of a future ſubſiſtence. If nature could be ſaid to have pointed out a profeſſion for him, that of the bar ſeems to have been it: in that faculty, his acuteneſs and penetration, and above all, his nervous and manly elocution, could ſcarcely have failed to diſtinguiſh him, and to have raiſed him to the higheſt honours of that lucrative profeſſion; but, whatever nature might have intended for him, fortune ſeems to have been the arbiter of his deſtiny, and by ſhutting up the avenues to wealth and civil honours, to have left him to diſplay his talents in the ſeveral characters of a moraliſt, a philoſopher, and a poet.

The time of his continuance at Oxford is diviſible into two periods, the former whereof commenced on the 31ſt day of October, 1728, and determined in Decem-

' a way to live by obſequiouſneſs, (in *Clement's-Inn*, as I remember,) ' and courting the attornies clerks for ſcraps. The extraordinary ' obſervance and diligence of the boy, made the ſociety willing to ' do him good. He appeared very ambitious to learn to write; ' and one of the attornies got a board knocked up at a window on ' the top of a ſtaircaſe, and that was his deſk, where he ſat and ' wrote after copies of court and other hands the clerks gave him. ' He made himſelf ſo expert a writer, that he took in buſineſs, and ' earned ſome pence by hackney-writing. And thus, by degrees, ' he puſhed his faculties, and fell to forms; and, by books that ' were lent him, became an exquiſite entering-clerk: and, by the ' ſame courſe of improvement of himſelf, an able counſel, firſt in ' ſpecial pleading, then at large. And, after he was called to the ' bar, had practice in the *King's Bench* court equal with any ' there.'

He ſucceeded Pemberton in the office of chief juſtice of the king's bench, and died of an apoplexy and palſy a ſhort time before the revolution. A curious delineation of his perſon and character may be ſeen in the volume above cited.

ber, 1729, when, as appears by a note in his diary in theſe words, 'i729 Dec. S. J. Oxonio rediit,' he left that place, the reaſon whereof, was a failure of pecuniary ſupplies from his father; but meeting with another ſource, the bounty, as it is ſuppoſed, of ſome one or more of the members of the cathedral, he returned, and made up the whole of his reſidence in the univerſity, about three years, during all which time his academical ſtudies, though not orderly, were to an aſtoniſhing degree intenſe. Whoever has peruſed Mr. Spence's life of Antonio Magliabechi, may diſcern a near reſemblance in their manner of reading, between that perſon and Johnſon: the former, ſays his author, 'ſeems never to 'have applied himſelf to any particular ſtudy. A paſ-'ſion for reading was his ruling paſſion, and a prodi-'gious memory his great talent: he read every book 'almoſt indifferently, as they happened to come into 'his hands: he read them with a ſurpriſing quick-'neſs, and yet retained, not only the ſenſe of what he 'read, but, often, all the words and the very manner 'of ſpelling them, if there was any thing peculiar of 'that kind in any author.'

A like propenſity to reading, and an equal celerity in the practice thereof, were obſervable in Johnſon: it was wonderful to ſee, when he took up a book, with what eagerneſs he peruſed, and with what haſte his eye, for it has been related, that he had the uſe of only one, travelled over it: he has been known to read a volume, and that not a ſmall one, at a ſitting; nor was he inferior in the power of memory to him with whom he is compared: whatever he read, became his own for ever, with all the advantages that a penetrating judgment and deep reflection could add to it. I

have

have heard him repeat, with ſcarce a miſtake of a word, paſſages from favourite authors, of three or four octavo pages in length. One inſtance of the greatneſs of his retentive faculty himſelf has thought fit to give, in his life of the Earl of Rocheſter, where may be ſeen a Latin poem upon Nothing, written by Paſſerat; for the inſertion whereof he had, as it is ſaid, no other aid than his own recollection. How far he approved that method of reading, which he is above ſaid to have purſued, and what value he ſet on the powers of memory, may be inferred from his character of the former of thoſe perſons in his lives of the poets, of whom he thus ſpeaks:

'He was remarkable for the power of reading 'with great rapidity, and of retaining with great 'fidelity what he ſo eaſily collected. He, therefore, 'always knew wnat the preſent queſtion required; 'and when his friends expreſſed their wonder at his 'acquiſitions, made in a ſtate of apparent negligence 'and drunkenneſs, he never diſcovered his hours of 'reading or method of ſtudy, but involved himſelf in 'affected ſilence, and fed his own vanity with their 'admiration and conjectures.'

It is little leſs than certain, that his own indigence, and the inability of his father to help him, called Johnſon from the univerſity ſooner than he meant to quit it: his father, either during his continuance there, or poſſibly before, had been by misfortunes rendered inſolvent, if not, as Johnſon told me, an actual bankrupt. The non-attainment of a degree, which after a certain ſtanding is conferred almoſt of courſe, he regretted not: it is true, he ſoon felt the want of one; but ample amends were afterwards made him, by

the voluntary grant of the higheſt academical honours that two of the moſt learned ſeminaries in Europe could beſtow.

The advantages he derived from an univerſity education, ſmall as they may hitherto ſeem, went a great way towards fixing, as well his moral as his literary character: the order and diſcipline of a college life, the reading the beſt authors, the attendance on public exerciſes, the early calls to prayer, the frequent inſtructions from the pulpit, with all the other means of religious and moral improvement, had their proper effect; and though they left his natural temper much as they found it, they begat in his mind thoſe ſentiments of piety which were the rule of his conduct throughout his future life, and made ſo conſpicuous a part of his character.

He could not, at this early period of his life, diveſt himſelf of an opinion, that poverty was diſgraceful; and was very ſevere in his cenſures of that œconomy in both our univerſities, which exacted at meals the attendance of poor ſcholars, under the ſeveral denominations of ſervitors in the one, and ſizers in the other: he thought that the ſcholar's, like the chriſtian life, levelled all diſtinctions of rank and worldly pre-eminence; but in this he was miſtaken: civil policy had, long before his coming into the world, reduced the ſeveral claſſes of men to a regular ſubordination, and given ſervitude its ſanction. The feudal ſyſtem of government throughout Europe had ſo arranged the ſeveral orders of ſubjects, that the lower were uniformly dependent on the higher; and in the hiſtory of the peerage of our own country, we find the retinues of the higher nobility made up of the ſons and daughters

ters of thoſe of the lower: Wolſey had in his train, earls, barons, and knights; and the founder of the preſent Cavendiſh family was his gentleman-uſher, at a ſalary of ten pounds a year: and, to juſtify the practice of perſonal ſervitude at meals, we have an example of a child waiting on his parents while at dinner, in the Pietas Puerilis, among the colloquies of Eraſmus *.

Upon his leaving the univerſity, he went home to the houſe of his father, which he found ſo nearly filled with relations, that is to ſay, the maiden ſiſters of his mother and uncle Cornelius Ford, whom his father, on the deceaſe of their brother in the ſummer of 1731, had taken in to board, that it would ſcarce receive him.

He brought with him a deep ſenſe of religion, a due reverence for the national church, and a reſpect for its miniſters; and theſe he retained, though he had been a witneſs to the profligacy of his uncle Ford, which was nearly enough to have effaced all ſuch impreſſions from a young mind. Having not then ſeen, as we now do, eccleſiaſtical benefices advertiſed for ſale, and conſidered by the purchaſers as lay-fees; nor beheld many of the beneficed clergy abandoning the duties of the clerical function to the loweſt of their order, themſelves becoming gentlemen at large, mixing in all public recreations and amuſements †, neglecting their ſtudies

* Adornatâ parentibus menſâ, recito conſecrationem: deinde prandentibus miniſtro, donec jubeor et ipſe prandium ſumere.

† While this is the caſe, there can be very little hope of mending the ſituation of the inferior clergy. An increaſe of income would raiſe them to a condition of employing ſubſtitutes whom mere neceſſity would compel to the performance of their duty, and theſe would have the ſame reaſon to complain as thoſe who at preſent are the objects of our compaſſion. In a word, were the gradations of the clergy to be multiplied, the moſt eſſential offices of their function would continue, as they now are, to be the employment of the loweſt of them.

for cards, preaching the ſermons of others, and affecting, in many particulars of their dreſs, the garb of the laity, in diſobedience to the canon which enjoins decency of apparel to miniſters *: I ſay, not having been a witneſs to theſe late refinements in manners, he, notwithſtanding the ferocity of his temper, reverenced the clergy as a body of men, who have been the greateſt improvers of learning, and to whom mankind have the higheſt obligations; but lamented that the race was nearly extinct.

As Johnſon's ſtay at the univerſity was not long enough for him to complete his ſtudies, it is natural to ſuppoſe, that at his return to Lichfield, he devoted his time to the improvement of them, and that having no call from thence, he continued there till the death of his father, which, as he has noted it, was in the month of December, 1731.

Being thus bereft of the little ſupport his father was able to afford him, and having, not only a profeſſion, but the means of ſubſiſtence to ſeek, he, in the month of March 1732, accepted of an invitation to the office of under-maſter or uſher of a free grammar-ſchool, at Market-Boſworth in Leiceſterſhire, founded and endowed by Sir Wolſtan Dixie, lord mayor of London in 1586, the upper maſter whereof was the reverend Anthony Blackwall, the author of a well-known book on the ſacred claſſics. The patron of this ſeminary was Sir Wolſtan Dixie, baronet, a deſcendant of the original founder; and the endowment being very ſmall, Johnſon's reſidence was in the manſion-houſe of Sir Wolſtan adjacent thereto; but the treatment he received from this perſon, who, in the pride of wealth, ſhewed no regard for learning or parts, nor reſpected

* The 74th, of 1603.

any

any man for his mental endowments, was ſuch that, preferring the chance of the wide world to his patronage, Johnſon, in the month of July, in the ſame year in which he went to Boſworth, reſigned his office, and took leave of a place, which he could never after ſpeak of but in terms of the utmoſt diſlike, and even of abhorrence.

By the middle of June, in the year 1732, he was able to eſtimate that ſlender pittance which devolved to him upon the deceaſe of his father; the amount whereof I find aſcertained by a memorandum in his diary, which, as it is deſcriptive of his circumſtances at the time, I here tranſlate, and at the bottom of the page have inſerted verbatim.

1732, June 15, I laid by eleven guineas; on which day I received all of my father's effects which I can hope for till the death of my mother, (which I pray may be late), that is to ſay, twenty pounds; ſo that I have my fortune to make, and care muſt be taken, that in the mean time, the powers of my mind may not grow languid through poverty, nor want drive me into wickedneſs *.

In the month of June in the following year, 1733, I find him reſident in the houſe of a perſon named Jarvis, at Birmingham, where, as he has noted in his diary, he rendered into Engliſh from the French, a voyage to Abyſſinia, which has ſince appeared to be that of Padre Jerome Lobo, a Portugueſe Jeſuit, with

* '1732, Junii 15, Undecim aureos depoſui, quo die quicquid 'ante matris funus, (quod ferum ſit precor), de paternis bonis 'ſperare licet, viginti ſcilicet libras, accepi. Uſque adeo mihi mea 'fortuna fingenda eſt interea, ne paupertate vires animi langueſ-'cant, ne in flagitia egeſtas adigat, cavendum.

the additions of Monſ. l'Abbé Le Grand, very curious and entertaining, of which the following is a character:

It contains a narration of the endeavours of a company of miſſionaries of the author's country to unite the Abyſſins to the church of Rome. It was tranſlated from the original Portugueſe into French by l'Abbé Le Grand, who, as Lobo had extended it no farther than his own concern in the miſſion, continued it down to the time when the Jeſuits were finally driven out of Æthiopia, with the addition of fifteen diſſertations on ſubjects relating to the hiſtory, antiquities, government, religion, manners, and natural hiſtory of Abyſſinia, and other countries mentioned by the original author.

The preface, which bears ſtronger marks of Johnſon's hand than any part of the work, is calculated to attract attention and credit: it commends the unaffected ſimplicity of the original narrative, and the learning of M. Le Grand; it acknowledges the omiſſions and deviations which the tranſlator thought it prudent to make, and it apologizes for any defects that may be diſcovered. Johnſon's diſquiſitive propenſity juſt dawns in an obſervation on the erroneous method of the Roman church, in making converts; but there is nothing ſtriking in the compoſition.

Were we to reſt our judgment on internal evidence, Johnſon's claim to the title of tranſlator of this work would be diſputable; it has ſcarce a feature reſembling him: the language is as ſimple and unornamented as John Bunyan's; the ſtyle is far from elegant, and ſometimes it is not even correct. Theſe circumſtances, together with frequent miſtakes and various orthography, would almoſt ſtagger our belief, but

that we have the authority of Johnſon himſelf to rely on, who often acknowledged it for his own.

As this voyage to Abyſſinia, notwithſtanding the country and manners it deſcribes are wonderful and intereſting, has not been ſo much noticed as Johnſon's later and original productions, it may not be thought impertinent to give the outline of the relation.

About the beginning of the ſeventeenth century, the then reigning emperor of Abyſſinia, for conſiderations that ſavoured more of good policy than of religion, became a convert to the church of Rome: many of his ſubjects had followed his example; and the miſſionaries already in the country were in want of co-adjutors to extend their progreſs. Padre Jerome Lobo, who was then employed in the Eaſt-Indian miſſion at Goa, was one deputed to this enterpriſe, which, at length, proved too much for Romiſh zeal and Jeſuitical dexterity.

With much difficulty he and his companions reached and got footing in the empire, where they had to endure a climate rendered by exceſſive heats and rains peſtiferous, and to engage in perilous journies acroſs deſarts infeſted by banditti, in perpetual fear of them and of wild beaſts, the tokens of whoſe depredations marked their way. When they arrived at the habitations of the people, their dangers were changed, but not diminiſhed; ſometimes they could not obtain proviſions, and at others, were confined to their houſes by the dread of aſſaſſination. Thoſe who were to be their diſciples, profeſſed, it is true, a ſuperſtitious religion, in ſome parts Judaical, in many others reſembling that of the church of Rome; but it had had little effect on their minds: moral virtues they had

ſcarcely any; in ſocial affections they were miſerably deficient, and their approaches to civilization and elegance were on a level with thoſe of their ſouthern neighbours at the Cape of Good Hope.

But labour and patience produced in time, a hope that the miſſion would not be fruitleſs: the number of their proſelytes was, at one period, ſo great, that the corporal ſtrength of the fathers was exhauſted in the exhortations previous to baptiſm. 'We erected 'our tent,' ſays Lobo, 'and placed our altar under 'ſome great trees, for the benefit of the ſhade; and 'every day before ſun-riſing, my companion and I 'began to catechiſe and inſtruct theſe new catholics, 'and uſed our utmoſt endeavours to make them 'abjure their errors. When we were weary with 'ſpeaking, we placed in ranks thoſe who were ſuffi-'ciently inſtructed, and paſſing through them with 'great veſſels of water, baptized them according to 'the form preſcribed by the church. As their num-'ber was very great, we cried aloud—*thoſe of this 'rank are named* Anthony—*thoſe of that rank* Peter;—'and did the ſame among the women, whom we ſe-'parated from among the men. We then confeſſed 'them, and admitted them to the communion. After 'maſs we applied ourſelves again to catechiſe, to in-'ſtruct, and receive the renunciation of their errors, 'ſcarce allowing ourſelves time to make a ſcanty meal, 'which we never did more than once a day.'

Zeal equal to this, and riſing in proportion to the oppoſition it met with, did theſe pious fathers exerciſe during nine years that they remained in Abyſſinia. Their ſucceſs was various and fluctuating; ſometimes it gave them ground to hope that all would be converted,

ſhewn them: at Suaquem, an iſland in the Red Sea, terms of ranſom were propoſed to them, which, though exorbitant, they were forced to accept; and, after ſurmounting many obſtacles and perils, that part of the miſſion with which Lobo was engaged, returned to Goa.

The revenge, which it was reported in Abyſſinia, the court of Portugal meditated, rendered a people naturally inhuman, ferocious: the remaining miſſionaries experienced ſtill harder fate than Lobo and his companions; many were put to death, and the whole fraternity ſo completely extirpated, that, after many efforts, all attempts to make a catholic people of the Abyſſins were abandoned, as chimerical and impracticable.

The diſſertations at the end of this work, and which Johnſon ſeems to eſtimate highly, contain variety of information and controverſial learning, particularly reſpecting the difference between the church that ſent the miſſion, and that which received it, and point out very clearly the inutility of endeavours founded on the principles of the Jeſuits.

Having completed this tranſlation, which I conjecture he was paid for by ſome bookſeller of Birmingham, who publiſhed it in an octavo volume, Johnſon, in February 1733-4, left that place, and returned to Lichfield, from whence, in the month of Auguſt following, he iſſued a propoſal, ſoliciting a ſubſcription to an edition of Politian's Poems *, with this title, 'Angeli Politiani Poemata Latina, quibus notas, cum

* The propoſal notifies, that ſubſcriptions would be taken in by N. [Nathanael] Johnſon, who had ſucceeded to his father's buſineſs.

'Hiſtoria

'Hiſtoria Latinæ Poeſeos a Petrarchæ ævo ad Politiani tempora deducta, et Vita Politiani fuſius quam antehac enarrata, addidit Sam. Johnſon.' The book was to be contained and printed in thirty octavo ſheets, and delivered at the price of five ſhillings; but not meeting with ſufficient encouragement, Johnſon dropped the deſign.

From the above particulars it evidently appears, that he had entertained a reſolution to depend for a livelihood upon what he ſhould be able, either in the way of original compoſition, or tranſlation, or in editing the works of celebrated authors, to procure by his ſtudies, and, in ſhort, to become an author by profeſſion; an occupation, which, though it may, in ſome views of it, be deemed mercenary, as adapting itſelf to particular occaſions and conjunctures, nay, to the intereſts, paſſions and prejudices, and even humours of mankind, has yet ſome illuſtrious examples, at leaſt in our times, to juſtify it. It is true, that many perſons diſtinguiſh between thoſe writings which are the effect of a natural impulſe of genius, and thoſe other that owe their exiſtence to intereſted motives, and, being the offspring of another parent, may, in ſome ſenſe, be ſaid to be illegitimate; but, Johnſon knew of no ſuch diſtinction, and would never acquieſce in it when made by others: on the contrary, I have, more than once, heard him aſſert, that he knew of no genuine motive for writing, other than neceſſity.

In the proſecution of this his deſign, he, in the year, 1734, made a tender of aſſiſtance to Cave, the editor, printer, and publiſher of the Gentleman's Magazine; a man of whom I ſhall hereafter have

frequent occaſion to ſpeak. The letter of Johnſon to Cave, on this occaſion, is yet extant, and is here given as a literary curioſity:

'SIR, Nov. 25, 1734.

'As you appear no leſs ſenſible than your readers, 'of the defect of your poetical article, you will not be 'diſpleaſed, if, in order to the improvement of it, I 'communicate to you the ſentiments of a perſon, who 'will undertake, on reaſonable terms, ſometimes to 'fill a column.

'His opinion is, that the public would not give you 'a bad reception, if, beſide the current wit of the 'month, which a critical examination would generally 'reduce to a narrow compaſs, you admitted, not 'only poems, inſcriptions, &c. never printed be-'fore, which he will ſometimes ſupply you with, 'but likewiſe ſhort literary diſſertations in Latin or 'Engliſh, critical remarks on authors ancient or mo-'dern, forgotten poems that deſerve revival, or looſe 'pieces, like Floyer's, worth preſerving. By this 'method, your Literary Article, for ſo it might be 'called, will, he thinks, be better recommended to 'the public, than by low jeſts, aukward buffoonery, 'or the dull ſcurrilities of either party.

'If ſuch a correſpondence will be agreeable to you, 'be pleaſed to inform me, in two poſts, what the con-'ditions are on which you ſhall expect it. Your late 'offer* gives me no reaſon to diſtruſt your generoſity. 'If you engage in any literary projects beſides this

* A prize of fifty pounds for the beſt poem 'on Life, Death, Judgment, Heaven and Hell.'

paper,

'paper, I have other deſigns to impart, if I could be 'ſecure from having others reap the advantage of 'what I ſhould hint.

'Your letter, by being directed to S. Smith, to be 'left at the Caſtle in Birmingham, Warwickſhire, will 'reach

'Your humble ſervant.' *

To this letter Cave returned an anſwer, dated 2d December following, wherein he accepted the ſervices of Johnſon, and retained him as a correſpondent and a contributor to his Magazine.

This correſpondence exhibits a view of the Gentleman's Magazine in its rudiments, and may excite a curioſity in the patrons thereof, to trace back to its origin the publication of a miſcellany, the fame whereof has extended itſelf to the moſt remote parts of the literary world. Hiſtories of the learned men of modern times, and ſhort abridgments of their works, as alſo ſuch pieces as for their brevity required ſome vehicle to convey them to poſterity, it has been the practice of foreign countries, in their memoirs, and of univerſities and academies, in their acts and tranſactions, to give. The hiſtorical and memorable diurnal events of the paſſing times, have alſo been recorded in publications variouſly denominated, particularly, in a work, entitled the Political State of Great Britain, beginning with the year 1711, and compiled by the well known Abel Boyer. In this are contained debates and ſpeeches in parliament; and alſo, abſtracts of po-

* This letter, and Cave's anſwer to it, may ſerve to refute an aſſertion in an anonymous account of Johnſon's life, that he was introduced to the acquaintance of Cave by Savage.

litical

litical pamphlets; but of a work that ſhould comprehend intelligence of both theſe kinds, we know of no exemplar in this country, earlier than the year 1716, when an eſſay towards ſuch a one was made in the publication of a book, entitled The Hiſtorical Regiſter, containing, an impartial relation of all tranſactions foreign and domeſtic, by a body of men, from whom few would have expected any thing of the kind. In ſhort, the editors of the Hiſtorical Regiſter, were the members of a ſociety, aſſociated about the year above-mentioned, for the purpoſe of inſurance from fire, which, from the badge aſſumed by them, obtained the denomination of the Sun-fire-Office, and is ſtill ſubſiſting in a flouriſhing ſtate. One of the managing perſons in this ſociety, was, if my information miſleads me not, a man of the name of Povey, who, by the way, was a great improver of that uſeful project, the Penny Poſt,* and died within my memory. Having a ſcheming head, a plauſible tongue, and a ready pen, he prevailed on his fellow-members to undertake the above publication, foreign as it was to the nature of their inſtitution. In Strype's continuation of Stow's Survey, I find the following article reſpecting this ſociety: 'All perſons taking out policies for 'inſurance, muſt pay two ſhillings and ſix-pence per 'quarter; and, beſides their inſurance, ſhall have a 'book, called the Hiſtorical Regiſter, left every quarter 'at their houſe.'

The Hiſtorical Regiſter gave alſo an account of the proceedings of Parliament: the firſt volume contains

* The original inventor thereof was one Mr. Dockwra, a citizen of ſuch eminence, that he ſtood for the office of Chamberlain, againſt Sir Wm. Fazakerley.

the

the ſpeeches in both houſes, on the debate on the Septennial Bill; but, ſo great is the caution obſerved in drawing them up, that none of thoſe in the Houſe of Lords are appropriated, otherwiſe, than by ſuch words as theſe: 'A noble Duke ſtood up, and ſaid,' 'This ſpeech was anſwered by a Northern Peer,' and other ſuch vague deſignations. In thoſe in the Houſe of Commons, the names of the ſpeakers, Mr. Shippen, Mr. Hampden, Sir Richard Steele, and others are given, without any artifices of concealment.

This publication was continued to the year 1737, inclusive, and may be ſuppoſed to have been ſuperſeded by the Gentleman's Magazine, which was then riſing very faſt in its reputation.

From the Hiſtorical Regiſter the hint was taken, of a publication, entitled The Grub-ſtreet Journal,* which, beſides a brief account of public occurrences, contained criticiſms and cenſures of dull and profane

* Mention is often made, in the Dunciad and other modern books, of Grub-ſtreet writers and Grub-ſtreet publications, but the terms are little underſtood: the following hiſtorical fact will explain them: During the uſurpation, a prodigious number of ſeditious and libellous pamphlets and papers, tending to exaſperate the people, and encreaſe the confuſion in which the nation was involved, were from time to time publiſhed. The authors of theſe were, for the moſt part, men whoſe indigent circumſtances compelled them to live in the ſuburbs and moſt obſcure parts of the town; Grub-ſtreet then abounded with mean and old houſes, which were let out in lodgings, at low rents, to perſons of this deſcription, whoſe occupation was the publiſhing anonymous treaſon and ſlander. One of the original inhabitants of this ſtreet was Fox the Martyrologiſt, who, during his abode there, wrote his Acts and Monuments. It was alſo rendered famous by having been the dwelling-place of Mr. Henry Welby, a gentleman of whom it is related in a printed narrative that he lived there forty years without being ſeen of any.

or

or immoral books and pamphlets, as alſo, original eſſays and letters to the editors. The chief conductors of it, were, Dr. John Martyn, then a young phyſician, afterwards profeſſor of botany in the univerſity of Cambridge, and Dr. Ruſſel, alſo a phyſician; the former aſſumed the name Bavius, and the latter Mævius. Its firſt publication was in January, 1730, and it meeting with encouragement, Cave projected an improvement thereon in a pamphlet of his own, and in the following year gave to the world the firſt number of the Gentleman's Magazine, with a notification that the ſame would be continued monthly, incurring thereby a charge of plagiariſm, which, as he is ſaid to have confeſſed it, we may ſuppoſe he did not look upon as criminal *.

Johnſon had not by his letter, herein before inſerted, ſo attached himſelf to Cave, as not to be at liberty to enter into a cloſer engagement with any other perſon: he, therefore, in 1736, made overtures to the Rev. Mr. Budworth, then maſter of the grammar ſchool at Brerewood, in Staffordſhire, and who had been bred under Mr. Blackwall, at Market Boſworth, to become his aſſiſtant; but Mr. Budworth thought himſelf under a neceſſity of declining them, from an apprehenſion that thoſe convulſive motions to which Johnſon through life was ſubject, might render him an object of imitation, and poſſibly of ridicule, with his pupils.

It may be remembered that in a preceding page, Johnſon is ſaid to have reſided for ſome months, in the year 1734, in the houſe of a perſon named

* Memoirs of the ſociety of Grub-ſtreet. Preface, page xii. et ſeqq.

Jarvis,

Jarvis, at Birmingham. To this circumſtance, by a conjecture not improbable, may be referred an important event of his life. At that time there dwelt at Birmingham a widow, the relict of Mr. Porter a mercer, who dying, left her, if not well jointured, ſo provided for, as made a match with her to a man in Johnſon's circumſtances deſirable: report ſays, ſhe was rather advanced in years; it is certain that ſhe had a ſon and daughter grown up; the former was in the laſt war a captain in the navy, and his ſiſter, lately dead, inherited from him a handſome fortune, acquired in the courſe of a long ſervice. Of her perſonal charms little can now be remembered: Johnſon has celebrated them in an inſcription on her tomb at Bromley; but, conſidering his infirmity, and admitting the truth of a confeſſion, ſaid to have been made by him, that he never ſaw 'the 'human face divine,' it may be queſtioned, whether himſelf was ever an eye-witneſs to them. The inſcription further declares her to have been of the family of Jarvis, and gives colour to a ſuppoſition that ſhe was either a ſiſter or other relation of the Jarvis above-mentioned.

With this perſon he married, his age being then about twenty-ſeven. Her fortune, which is conjectured to have been about eight hundred pounds, placed him in a ſtate of affluence, to which before he had been a ſtranger. He was not ſo imprudent as to think it an inexhauſtable mine; on the contrary, he reflected on the means of improving it. His acquiſitions at ſchool and at the univerſity, and the improvement he had made of his talents in the ſtudy of the French and Italian languages, qualified him, in an eminent degree, for an inſtructor of youth in claſſical litera-

ture; and the reputation of his father, and the connections he had formed in and about Lichfield, pointed out to him a fair proſpect of ſucceeding in that uſeful profeſſion.

There dwelt in the above-mentioned city, a very reſpectable gentleman, Mr. Gilbert Walmſley, regiſter of the eccleſiaſtical court of the biſhop thereof, to whoſe houſe, in his ſchool and alſo in his univerſity vacations, Johnſon was a welcome gueſt: the ſame perſon was alſo a friend of captain Garrick, who had for ſome time been reſident at Lichfield, and, by conſequence, of Mr. David Garrick, his ſon. His character is ſo well pourtrayed by Johnſon, and repreſents in ſuch lively colours his friendſhip for him, that it would be injuſtice to omit the inſertion of it, as given in the life of Edmund Smith:—

'Of Gilbert Walmſley, thus preſented to my mind, 'let me indulge myſelf in the remembrance. I knew 'him very early; he was one of the firſt friends that 'literature procured me; and, I hope that, at leaſt, 'my gratitude made me worthy of his notice.

'He was of an advanced age, and I was only not 'a boy; yet, he never received my notions with con-'tempt. He was a whig, with all the virulence and 'malevolence of his party; yet difference of opinion 'did not keep us apart: I honoured him, and he en-'dured me.

'He had mingled with the gay world, without 'exemption from its vices or its follies, but had ne-'ver neglected the cultivation of his mind; his belief 'of revelation was unſhaken; his learning preſerved 'his principles; he grew firſt regular, and then 'pious.

'His

'His ſtudies had been ſo various, that I am not able 'to name a man of equal knowledge. His acquain- 'tance with books was great, and what he did not 'immediately know, he could at leaſt tell where to 'find. Such was his amplitude of learning, and ſuch 'his copiouſneſs of communication, that it may be 'doubted whether a day now paſſes, in which I have 'not ſome advantage from his friendſhip.

'At this man's table I enjoyed many chearful and 'inſtructive hours, with companions, ſuch as are not 'often found; with one who has lengthened, and one 'who has gladdened life; with Dr. James, whoſe 'ſkill in phyſic will be long remembered; and with 'David Garrick, whom I hoped to have gratified with 'this character of our common friend: but what are 'the hopes of man! I am diſappointed by that ſtroke 'of death, which has eclipſed the gaiety of nations, 'and impoveriſhed the public ſtock of harmleſs 'pleaſure.'

The benevolent perſon, ſo gratefully remembered in the above encomium, knowing the abilities of Johnſon, encouraged him in his deſign of becoming a teacher of literature: he ſuggeſted to him the taking a large houſe, ſituate in a place adjacent to Lichfield; which, however the name of it be ſpelt, the common people call Edjal: thither Johnſon went, and with him young Garrick, who, though he had been educated in Lichfield ſchool, and was then near eighteen years old, having been diverted in the courſe of his ſtudies by a call to Liſbon, ſtood in need of improvement in the Latin and French languages.

The placing Garrick under the tuition of Johnſon, was an act of Mr. Walmſley's, and reſembles that

politic device of country houſe-wives, the placing one egg in the neſt of a hen to induce her to lay more: it ſucceeded ſo far, as to draw from the families of the neighbouring gentry a few pupils, and among the reſt, a ſon of Mr. Offley, of Staffordſhire; a name, that for centuries paſt, may be traced in the hiſtory and records of that county. But, ſo adverſe were his fortunes in this early period, that this well-planned ſcheme of a ſettlement diſappointed the hopes of Johnſon and his friends; for, neither his own abilities, nor the patronage of Mr. Walmſley, nor the exertions of Mrs. Johnſon and her relations, ſucceeded farther than to produce an acceſſion of about five or ſix pupils; ſo that his number, at no time, exceeded eight, and of thoſe not all were boarders.

After waiting a reaſonable time in hopes of more pupils, Johnſon, finding they came in but ſlowly, had recourſe to the uſual method of raiſing a ſchool. In the year, 1736, he advertiſed the inſtructing young gentlemen in the Greek and Latin languages, by himſelf, at his houſe, deſcribing it near Lichfield.* That this notification failed of its end, we can ſcarce wonder, if we reflect, that he was little more than twenty-ſeven years of age when he publiſhed it, and that he had not the vanity to profeſs teaching all ſciences, nor the effrontery of thoſe, who, in theſe more modern times, undertake, in private boarding-ſchools to qualify young men for holy orders.

* The following is the advertiſement which he publiſhed upon the occaſion:--- 'At Edial, near Lichfield, in Staffordſhire, young 'gentlemen are boarded, and taught the Latin and Greek languages 'by SAMUEL JOHNSON.' Vide Gent. Mag. for 1736, Page 418.

By means of a paper which I have now before me, I am able to furniſh, what I take to have been his method or plan of inſtitution; and, as it may be deemed a curioſity, and may ſerve the purpoſe of future inſtructors of youth, I here inſert it:

When the introduction or formation of nouns and verbs is perfectly maſtered, the pupils learn

Corderius, by Mr. Clarke; beginning at the ſame time to tranſlate out of his introduction. They then proceed to

Eraſmus, reading him with Clarke's tranſlation. Theſe books form the firſt claſs.

Claſs II. Read Eutropius and Cornelius Nepos, or Juſtin with the tranſlation. The firſt claſs to repeat by memory, in the morning, the rules they had learned before; and, in the afternoon, the Latin rules of the nouns and verbs. They are alſo, on Thurſdays and Saturdays to be examined in the rules they have learned.

The ſecond claſs does the ſame while in Eutropius; afterwards, they are to get and repeat the irregular nouns and verbs; and alſo, the rules for making and ſcanning verſes, in which they are to be examined as the firſt claſs.

Claſs III. Read Ovid's Metamorphoſes in the morning, and Cæſar's Commentaries in the afternoon. Continue the Latin rules till they are perfect in them. Proceed then to Leeds's Greek Grammar, and are examined as before.

> They then proceed to Virgil, beginning at the ſame time to compoſe themes and verſes,* and learn Greek, and from thence paſs on to Horace, Terence, and Salluſt. The Greek authors afterwards read are, firſt, thoſe in the Attic dialect, which are Cebes, Ælian, Lucian by Leeds, and Xenophon: next Homer in the Ionic, Theocritus Doric, Euripides Attic and Doric.

From two letters, firſt inſerted in the Gentleman's Magazine, and ſince in ſundry other publications, from Mr. Walmſley to his friend the reverend Mr. Colſon, a mathematician, and, in his later years, Lucaſian profeſſor at Cambridge, little is to be learnt reſpecting the hiſtory of Johnſon and Garrick, at this period: the one wants the date of the month, the other that of the year; and though, in the order of their publication, the one immediately follows the other, there muſt have been ſome interval between the times of writing the firſt and the laſt. The firſt is dated in 1737, and, as it contains a recommendation of Garrick to Mr. Colſon, for inſtruction in mathematics, philoſophy, and human learning, leads us to ſuppoſe, that before the time of writing it, Johnſon's ſcheme of taking in boarders had proved abortive. The latter, written in what year we know not, and inſerted below, recommends both Johnſon and Garrick to his notice, the former as a good ſcholar and one that gave hopes

* Johnſon had through his life a propenſity to Latin compoſition: he ſhewed it very early at ſchool, and while there made ſome Latin verſes, for which the Earl of Berkſhire, who was a good ſcholar, and had always a Horace in his pocket, gave him a guinea.

of turning out a fine tragedy-writer; and, we are from good authority aſſured, that in March, in the year laſt above-mentioned, they, on horſe-back, arrived in town together.

'Dear Sir, Lichfield, March 2.

'I had the favour of yours, and am extremely 'obliged to you; but cannot ſay, I had a greater 'affection for you upon it, than I had before, being 'long ſince ſo much endeared to you, as well by an 'early friendſhip, as by your many excellent and va-'luable qualifications. And, had I a ſon of my own, 'it would be my ambition, inſtead of ſending him to 'the univerſity, to diſpoſe of him as this young gen-'tleman is.

'He and another neighbour of mine, one Mr. S. 'Johnſon, ſet out this morning for London together. 'Davy Garrick is to be with you early the next 'week, and Mr. Johnſon to try his fate with a tra-'gedy, and to ſee to get himſelf employed in ſome 'tranſlation either from the Latin or the French. 'Johnſon is a very good ſcholar and a poet, and, I 'have great hopes, will turn out a fine tragedy-'writer. If it ſhould any ways lay in your way, 'doubt not but you would be ready to recommend 'and aſſiſt your countryman.

G. WALMSLEY.'

The hope ſuggeſted in this letter is grounded on a circumſtance which will lead us back to about the year before he quitted his ſchool at Edial. It muſt be imagined, the inſtruction of ſo ſmall a number of ſcholars as were under his care, left him at leiſure to purſue his

private ſtudies and amuſements, which, for the moſt part, conſiſted in deſultory reading. Let it not excite wonder in any that ſhall peruſe theſe memoirs, to be told, that Burton on Melancholy was a book that he frequently reſorted to for the purpoſe of exhilaration, or that, at times, he ſhould find entertainment in turning over Knolles's voluminous and neglected hiſtory of the Turks. In the many hours of leiſure which he may be ſaid rather to have endured than enjoyed, we muſt ſuppoſe ſome employed in the contemplation of his fortunes, the means of improving them, and of reſiſting the adverſe accidents to which human life is expoſed, and of which he had already had ſome experience. The ſtage holds forth temptations to men of genius, which many have been glad to embrace: the profits ariſing from a tragedy, including the repreſentation and printing of it, and the connections it ſometimes enables the author to form, were in Johnſon's idea ineſtimable; and, it is not impoſſible, but that Garrick, who, before this time, had manifeſted a propenſity towards the ſtage, had ſuggeſted to him the thought of writing one: certain it is, that during his reſidence at Edial, and under the eye of his friend Mr. Walmſley, he planned and completed that poem which gave this gentleman occaſion to ſay, he was likely to become a fine tragedy-writer.

He choſe for his ſtory an action related by Knolles in his hiſtory above-mentioned with all the powers of the moſt affecting eloquence: to give it at large would be to tranſgreſs the limits I have preſcribed myſelf, and to abridge it would injure it: I will do neither; but referring the reader to the hiſtorian himſelf, will relate it as a bare hiſtorical fact.

Mahomet

Mahomet the Great, firſt emperor of the Turks, in the year 1453 laid ſiege to the city of Conſtantinople, then poſſeſſed by the Greeks, and, after an obſtinate reſiſtance, took and ſacked it. Among the many young women whom his commanders thought fit to lay hands on and preſent to him, was one, named Irene, a Greek, of incomparable beauty and ſuch rare perfection of body and mind, that the emperor becoming enamoured of her, neglected the care of his government and empire for two whole years, and thereby ſo exaſperated the Janizaries and other of his warlike ſubjects, that they mutinied, and threatened to dethrone him. To prevent this miſchief, Muſtapha Baſſa, a perſon of great credit with him, undertook to repreſent to him the great danger to which he lay expoſed by the indulgence of his paſſion: he called to his remembrance the characters, actions, and atchievements of many of his predeceſſors, and the ſtate of his government; and, in ſhort, ſo rouſed him from his lethargy, that he took a horrible reſolution to ſilence the clamours of his people, by the ſacrifice of this admirable creature: accordingly, on a future day, he commanded her to be dreſſed and adorned in the richeſt manner that ſhe and her attendants could deviſe, and againſt a certain hour iſſued orders for the nobility and leaders of his army to attend him in the great hall of his palace. When they were all aſſembled, himſelf appeared with great pomp and magnificence, leading his late captive, but now abſolute miſtreſs, by the hand, unconſcious of guilt and ignorant of his deſign. With a furious and menacing look, he gave the beholders to underſtand, that he knew the cauſe of their diſcontent, and that he meant

to

to remove it; but bade them firſt view that lady, whom he ſtill held with his left hand, and ſay whether any of them being poſſeſſed of a jewel ſo rare and precious, a woman ſo lovely and fair, would for any cauſe forego her; to which they anſwered, that he had great reaſon for his affection towards her.

To this the emperor replied, that this being their opinion, he would convince them that his actions were in his own power, and that he was yet maſter of himſelf. 'And having ſo ſaid,' ſays my author, 'preſently with one of his hands catching the fair 'Greek by the hair of the head, and drawing his 'falchion with the other, he, at one blow, ſtruck 'off her head, to the great terror of them all; and 'having ſo done, ſaid unto them, "Now by this, "judge whether your emperor is able to bridle his "affections or not." *

It no where appears that, in this journey to London, Mrs. Johnſon was one of the company; it is rather to be conjectured, that her huſband, having abandoned the hope of ſucceeding in his attempt to raiſe a ſchool, left to her the care of the houſe, and the management of the ſmall part of her fortune, which, after the fitting

* Two tragedies founded on this ſtory had already appeared, before Johnſon conceived his intention of producing a third. The former of theſe was written by Gilbert Swinhoe, Eſq; a native of Northumberland, who lived temp. Car. I. & Car. II.; and was publiſhed in 4to. 1658, with the title of Unhappy Fair Irene her Tragedy. See Langbaine's Account of Dramatic Poets, edit. 1691, p. 499. Of the latter, entitled, Irene or the Fair Greek, 4to. 1708, one Charles Goring, Eſq; ſuppoſed to be the ſame perſon with one of that name who was of Magdalen college, Oxford, and in 1687 took the degree of Maſter of Arts, was the author. See Biographia Dramatica, art. Goring, Charles, Eſq.

up

up and furniſhing the ſame, together with two years' expenditure, muſt be ſuppoſed to be left; and, that this could be no other than ſmall, may be inferred from her natural temper, which it is ſaid was as little diſpoſed to parſimony as that of her huſband.

It is not my intention to purſue the hiſtory of Mr. Garrick's progreſs in life, both becauſe I have not taken upon me to be his biographer, and, becauſe the principal events of it occur in the memoirs of him, written with great candour and, I dare ſay, truth, by Mr. Thomas Davies, and by him publiſhed in two volumes, octavo; but the courſe of this narration requires me occaſionally to mention ſuch particulars concerning him, as in any manner connect him with the ſubject I am engaged in; and this leads me to mention a fact concerning them both, that I had from a perſon now living, who was a witneſs to it, and of whoſe veracity the leaſt doubt cannot be entertained. They had been but a ſhort time in London before the ſtock of money that each ſet out with, was nearly exhauſted; and, though they had not, like the prodigal ſon, 'waſted their ſubſtance in riotous living,' they began, like him, 'to be in want.' In this extremity, Garrick ſuggeſted the thought of obtaining credit from a tradeſman, whom he had a ſlight knowledge of, Mr. Wilcox a bookſeller, in the Strand: to him they applied, and repreſenting themſelves to him, as they really were, two young men, friends, and travellers from the ſame place, and juſt arrived with a view to ſettle here, he was ſo moved with their artleſs tale, that, on their joint note, he advanced them all that their modeſty would permit them to aſk, (five pounds), which was, ſoon after, punctually repaid.

It

It has been before related, that Johnſon had engaged his pen in the ſervice of Cave; as it ſeems, under ſome fictitious name, perhaps, that common one of Smith, which he directs Cave to addreſs him by, in his letter of 25th Nov. 1734. Being now come to town, and determined, or rather conſtrained, to rely on the labour of his brain for ſupport, he, to improve the correſpondence he had formed, thought proper to diſcover himſelf, and in his real name to communicate to Cave a project which he had formed, and which the following letter will explain:

Greenwich, next door to the Golden-Heart,
'SIR, Church-ſtreet, July 12, 1737.

'Having obſerved in your papers very uncommon 'offers of encouragement to men of letters, I have 'choſen, being a ſtranger in London, to communi-'cate to you the following deſign, which, I hope, 'if you join in it, will be of advantage to both of 'us.

'The hiſtory of the Council of Trent, having 'been lately tranſlated into French, and publiſhed 'with large notes by Dr. Le Courayer, the reputa-'tion of that book is ſo much revived in England, 'that, it is preſumed, a new tranſlation of it from 'the Italian, together with Le Courayer's notes from 'the French, could not fail of a favourable recep-'tion.

'If it be anſwered that the hiſtory is already in 'Engliſh, it muſt be remembered that there was 'the ſame objection againſt Le Courayer's undertak-'ing, with this diſadvantage, that the French had 'a verſion by one of their beſt tranſlators, whereas

'you cannot read three pages of the Engliſh hiſtory 'without diſcovering that the ſtyle is capable of great 'improvements; but whether thoſe improvements 'are to be expected from this attempt, you muſt 'judge from the ſpecimen, which, if you approve 'the propoſal, I ſhall ſubmit to your examina-'tion.

'Suppoſe the merit of the verſions equal, we may 'hope that the addition of the notes will turn the 'balance in our favour, conſidering the reputation of 'the Annotator.

'Be pleaſed to favour me with a ſpeedy anſwer, if 'you are not willing to engage in this ſcheme; and 'appoint me a day to wait on you, if you are.

'I am, Sir, your humble ſervant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

Cave's acquieſcence, in the above propoſal, drew Johnſon into a cloſe intimacy with him: he was much at St. John's Gate, and taught Garrick the way thither. Cave had no great reliſh for mirth, but he could bear it; and having been told by Johnſon, that his friend had talents for the theatre, and was come to London with a view to the profeſſion of an actor, expreſſed a wiſh to ſee him in ſome comic character: Garrick readily complied; and, as Cave himſelf told me, with a little preparation of the room over the great arch of St. John's gate, and, with the aſſiſtance of a few journeymen printers, who were called together for the purpoſe of reading the other parts, repreſented, with all the graces of comic humor, the principal character in Fielding's farce of the Mock-Doctor.

Cave's

Cave's temper was phlegmatic: though he aſſumed, as the publiſher of the Magazine, the name of Sylvanus Urban, he had few of thoſe qualities that conſtitute the character of urbanity. Judge of his want of them by this queſtion, which he once put to an author: 'Mr. ——, I hear you have juſt publiſhed a pamphlet, and am told there is a very good paragraph in it, upon the ſubject of muſic: did you write that yourſelf?' His diſcernment was alſo ſlow; and as he had already at his command ſome writers of proſe and verſe, who, in the language of bookſellers are called good hands,* he was the backwarder in making advances,

* Mr. Moſes Browne, originally a pen-cutter, was, ſo far as concerned the poetical part of it, the chief ſupport of the Magazine, which he fed with many a nouriſhing morſel. This perſon being a lover of angling, wrote piſcatory eclogues; and was a candidate for the fifty pound prize mentioned in Johnſon's firſt letter to Cave, and for other prizes which Cave engaged to pay him who ſhould write the beſt poem on certain ſubjects; in all or moſt of which competitions Mr. Browne had the good fortune to ſucceed. He publiſhed theſe and other poems of his writing, in an octavo volume, Lond. 1739; and has therein given proofs of an exuberant fancy and a happy invention. Some years after he entered into holy orders. A farther account of him may be ſeen in the Biographia Dramatica, to a place in which work he ſeems to have acquired a title, by ſome juvenile compoſitions for the ſtage. Being a perſon of a religious turn, he alſo publiſhed in verſe, a ſeries of devout contemplations, called Sunday Thoughts. Johnſon, who often expreſſed his diſlike of religious poetry, and who, for the purpoſe of religious meditation, ſeemed to think one day as proper as another, read them with cold approbation, and ſaid, he had a great mind to write and publiſh Monday Thoughts.

To the proofs above adduced of the courſeneſs of Cave's manners, let me add the following: he had undertaken, at his own riſque, to publiſh a tranſlation of Du Halde's Hiſtory of China, in which were

advances, or courting an intimacy with Johnſon. Upon the firſt approach of a ſtranger, his practice was to continue ſitting, a poſture in which he was ever to be found, and, for a few minutes, to continue ſilent: if

were contained ſundry geographical and other plates. Each of theſe he inſcribed to one or other of his friends; and, among the reſt, one '*To Moſes Browne.*' With this blunt and familiar deſignation of his perſon, Mr. Browne was juſtly offended: to appeaſe him, Cave directed an engraver, to introduce with a caret under the line, *Mr.* and thought, that in ſo doing, he had made ample amends to Mr. Browne for the indignity done him.

Mr. John Duick, alſo a pen-cutter, and a near neighbour of Cave, was a frequent contributor to the Magazine, of ſhort poems, written with ſpirit and eaſe. He was a kinſman of Browne, and the author of a good copy of encomiaſtic verſes prefixed to the collection of Browne's poems above-mentioned.

Mr. Foſter Webb, a young man who had received his education in Mr. Watkins's academy in Spital-ſquare, and afterwards became clerk to a merchant in the city, was, at firſt, a contributor to the Magazine, of enigmas, a ſpecies of poetry in which he then delighted, but was diſſuaded from it by the following lines, which appeared in the Magazine for October, 1740, after a few ſucceſsful eſſays in that kind of writing:

'Too modeſt bard, with enigmatic veil
'No longer let thy muſe her charms conceal;
'Though oft the Sun in clouds his face diſguiſe,
'Still he looks nobler when he gilds the ſkies.
'Do thou, like him, avow thy native flame,
'Burſt thro' the gloom, and brighten into fame.'

After this friendly exhortation, Mr. Webb, in thoſe hours of leiſure which buſineſs afforded, amuſed himſelf with tranſlating from the Latin claſſics, particularly Ovid and Horace: from the latter of theſe he rendered into Engliſh verſe, with better ſucceſs than any that had before attempted it, the odes 'Quis multa 'gracilis te puer in roſa;' 'Solvitur acris hyems grata vice veris, & 'Favoni,' 'Parcus Deorum cultor & infrequens;' and 'Diffugêre ni-'ves, redeunt jam gramina campis;' all which are inſerted in Cave's Magazine.

if at any time he was inclined to begin the diſcourſe, it was generally by putting a leaf of the Magazine, then in the preſs, into the hand of his viſitor, and aſking his opinion of it. I remember that, calling in on him

Magazine. His ſignature was ſometimes Telarius, at others Vedaſtus. He was a modeſt, ingenious, and ſober young man; but a conſumption defeated the hopes of his friends, and took him off in the twenty-ſecond year of his age.

Mr. John Smith, another of Mr. Watkins's pupils, was a writer in the Magazine, of proſe eſſays, chiefly on religious and moral ſubjects, and died of a decline about the ſame time.

Mr. John Canton, apprentice to the above-named Mr. Watkins, and alſo his ſucceſſor in his academy, was a contributor to the Magazine, of verſes, and afterwards, of papers on philoſophical and mathematical ſubjects. The diſcoveries he made in electricity and magnetiſm are well known, and are recorded in the tranſactions of the Royal Society, of which he afterwards became a member.

Mr. William Rider, bred in the ſame prolific ſeminary, was a writer in the Magazine, of verſes ſigned Philargyrus. He went from ſchool to Jeſus college, Oxford, and, ſome years after his leaving the ſame, entered into holy orders, and became ſur-maſter of St. Paul's ſchool, in which office he continued many years, but at length was obliged to quit that employment by reaſon of his deafneſs.

Mr. Adam Calamy, a ſon of Dr. Edmund Calamy, an eminent non-conformiſt divine, and author of the Abridgment of Mr. Baxter's Hiſtory of his Life and Times, was another of Mr. Watkins's pupils, that wrote in the Magazine; the ſubjects on which he chiefly exerciſed his pen were eſſays in polemical theology and republican politics; and he diſtinguiſhed them by the aſſumed ſignature of '*A conſiſtent proteſtant.*' He was bred to the profeſſion of an attorney, and was brother to Mr. Edmund Calamy, a diſſenting teacher, of eminence for his worth and learning.

A ſeminary, of a higher order than that above-mentioned, viz. the academy of Mr. John Eames in Moorfields, furniſhed the Magazine with a number of other correſpondents in mathematics and other branches of ſcience and polite literature. This was an inſtitution ſupported

him once, he gave me to read the beautiful poem of Collins, written for Shakeſpeare's Cymbeline, 'To fair Fidele's graſſy tomb,' which, though adapted to a particular circumſtance in the play, Cave was for inſerting in his Magazine, without any reference to the ſubject: I told him it would loſe of its beauty if it were ſo publiſhed: this he could not ſee; nor could he be convinced of the propriety of the name Fidele: he thought Paſtora a better, and ſo printed it.

He was ſo incompetent a judge of Johnſon's abilities, that, meaning at one time to dazzle him with the ſplendor of ſome of thoſe luminaries in literature who favoured him with their correſpondence, he told him that, if he would, in the evening, be at a certain alehouſe in the neighbourhood of Clerkenwell, he might have a chance of ſeeing Mr. Browne and another or

ſupported by the Diſſenters, the deſign whereof was to qualify young men for their miniſtry. Mr. Eames was formerly the continuator of the abridgement of the Philoſophical Tranſactions begun by Jones and Lowthorp, and was a man of great knowledge, and a very able tutor. Under him were bred many young men who afterwards became eminently diſtinguiſhed for learning and abilities; among them were the late Mr. Parry, of Cirenceſter, the late Dr. Furneaux, and Dr. Gibbons; and, if I miſtake not, the preſent Dr. Price. The pupils of this academy had heads that teemed with knowledge, which, as faſt as they acquired it, they were prompted by a juvenile and laudable ambition to communicate in letters to Mr. Urban.

To this account of Cave's correſpondents might be added the celebrated names of Dr. Birch, who will be ſpoken of hereafter, Mrs. Carter, Dr. Akenſide, the Rev. Mr. Samuel Pegge, who, by an ingenious tranſpoſition of the letters of his name, formed the plauſible ſignature of Paul Gemſege; Mr. Luck, of Barnſtaple in Devonſhire; Mr. Henry Price, of Pool, in Dorſetſhire; Mr. Richard Yate, of Chively, in Shropſhire; Mr. John Bancks; and, that induſtrious and prolific genius, Mr. John Lockman.

two of the perſons mentioned in the preceding note? Johnſon accepted the invitation; and being introduced by Cave, dreſſed in a looſe horſeman's coat, and ſuch a great buſhy uncombed wig as he conſtantly wore, to the ſight of Mr. Browne, whom he found ſitting at the upper end of a long table, in a cloud of tobacco-ſmoke, had his curioſity gratified.

Johnſon ſaw very clearly thoſe offenſive particulars that made a part of Cave's character; but, as he was one of the moſt quick-ſighted men I ever knew in diſcovering the good and amiable qualities of others, a faculty which he has diſplayed, as well in the life of Cave, as in that of Savage, printed among his works, ſo was he ever inclined to palliate their defects; and, though he was above courting the patronage of a man, whom, for many reaſons, he could not but hold cheap, he diſdained not to accept it, when tendered with any degree of complacency.

And this was the general tenor of Johnſon's behaviour; for, though his character through life was marked with a roughneſs that approached to ferocity, it was in the power of almoſt every one to charm him into mildneſs, and to render him gentle and placid, and even courteous, by ſuch a patient and reſpectful attention as is due to every one, who, in his diſcourſe, ſignifies a deſire either to inſtruct or delight. Bred to no profeſſion, without relations, friends, or intereſt, Johnſon was an adventurer in the wide world, and had his fortunes to make: the arts of inſinuation and addreſs were, in his opinion, too ſlow in their operation to anſwer his purpoſe; and, he rather choſe to diſplay his parts to all the world, at the riſque of being thought arrogant, than to wait for the aſſiſtance

of

of ſuch friends as he could make, or the patronage of ſome individual that had power or influence, and who might have the kindneſs to take him by the hand, and lift him into notice. With all that aſperity of manners with which he has been charged, and which kept at a diſtance many, who, to my knowledge, would have been glad of an intimacy with him, he poſſeſſed the affections of pity and compaſſion in a moſt eminent degree. In a mixed company, of which I was one, the converſation turned on the peſtilence which raged in London, in the year 1665, and gave occaſion to Johnſon to ſpeak of Dr. Nathanael Hodges, who, in the height of that calamity, continued in the city, and was almoſt the only one of his profeſſion that had the courage to oppoſe the endeavours of his art to the ſpreading of the contagion. It was the hard fate of this perſon, a ſhort time after, to die a priſoner for debt, in Ludgate: Johnſon related this circumſtance to us, with the tears ready to ſtart from his eyes; and, with great energy, ſaid, 'Such a man would not have been ſuffered 'to periſh in theſe times.'

It ſeems by the event of this firſt expedition, that Johnſon came to London for little elſe than to look about him: it afforded him no opportunity of forming connections, either valuable in themſelves, or available to any future purpoſe of his life. Mr. Pope had ſeen and commended his tranſlation of the Meſſiah; but Johnſon had not the means of acceſs to him; and, being a ſtranger to his perſon, his ſpirit would not permit him to ſolicit ſo great a favour from one, who muſt be ſuppoſed to have been troubled with ſuch kind of applications. With one perſon, however, he commenced an intimacy, the motives to which, at firſt

view, may probably ſeem harder to be accounted for, than any one particular in his life. This perſon was Mr. Richard Savage, whoſe misfortunes, together with his vices, had driven him to St. John's gate, and thereby introduced him to the acquaintance of Johnſon, which, founded on his part in compaſſion, ſoon improved into friendſhip and a mutual communication of ſentiments and counſels. The hiſtory of this man is well known by the life of him written by Johnſon; which, if in no other reſpect valuable, is curious, in that it gives to view a character ſelf-formed, as owing nothing to parental nurture, and ſcarce any thing to moral tuition, and deſcribes a mind, in which, as in a neglected garden, weeds, without the leaſt obſtruction, were ſuffered to grow into luxuriance: nature had endowed him with fine parts, and thoſe he cultivated as well as he was able; but his mind had received no moral culture, and for want thereof, we find him to have been a ſtranger to humility, gratitude, and thoſe other virtues that tend to conciliate the affections of men, and inſure the continuance of friendſhip.

It may be conjectured that Johnſon was captivated by the addreſs and demeanour of Savage, at his firſt approach; for it muſt be noted of him, that, though he was always an admirer of genteel manners, he at this time had not been accuſtomed to the converſation of gentlemen; and Savage, as to his exterior, was, to a remarkable degree, accompliſhed: he was a handſome, well-made man, and very courteous in the modes of ſalutation. I have been told, that in the taking off his hat and diſpoſing it under his arm, and in his bow, he diſplayed as much grace as thoſe actions were capable of; and that he underſtood the exerciſe of a gentleman's

man's weapon, may be inferred from the uſe he made of it in that raſh encounter which is related in his life, and to which his greateſt misfortunes were owing. Theſe accompliſhments, and the eaſe and pleaſantry of his converſation, were, probably, the charms that wrought on Johnſon, and hid from his view thoſe baſer qualities of Savage, with which, as his hiſtorian, he has nevertheleſs been neceſſitated to mark his character. The ſimilarity of their circumſtances might farther conduce to beget an unreſerved confidence in each other; they had both felt the pangs of poverty, and the want of patronage: Savage had let looſe his reſentment againſt the poſſeſſors of wealth, in a collection of poems printed about the year 1727, and Johnſon was ripe for an avowal of the ſame ſentiments: they ſeemed both to agree in the vulgar opinion, that the world is divided into two claſſes, of men of merit without riches, and men of wealth without merit; never conſidering the poſſibility that both might concenter in the ſame perſon, juſt as when, in the compariſon of women, we ſay, that virtue is of more value than beauty, we forget that many are poſſeſſed of both.

In ſpeculations of this kind, and a mutual condolence of their fortunes, they paſſed many a melancholy hour, and thoſe at a time when, it might be ſuppoſed, the reflection on them had made repoſe deſirable: on the contrary, that very reflection is known to have interrupted it. Johnſon has told me, that whole nights have been ſpent by him and Savage in converſations of this kind, not under the hoſpitable roof of a tavern, where warmth might have invigorated their ſpirits, and wine diſpelled their care; but in a perambulation round the ſquares of Weſtminſter, St. James's in

particular, when all the money they could both raiſe was leſs than ſufficient to purchaſe for them the ſhelter and ſordid comforts of a night cellar.

Of the reſult of their converſations little can now be known, ſave, that they gave riſe to thoſe principles of patriotiſm, that both, for ſome years after, avowed; they both with the ſame eye ſaw, or believed they ſaw, that the then miniſter meditated the ruin of this country; that exciſe laws, ſtanding armies, and penal ſtatutes, were the means by which he meant to effect it; and, at the riſque of their liberty, they were bent to oppoſe his meaſures; but Savage's ſpirit was broken by the ſenſe of his indigence, and the preſſure of thoſe misfortunes which his imprudence had brought on him, and Johnſon was left alone to maintain the conteſt.

The character and manners of Savage were ſuch, as leave us little room to think, that Johnſon could profit by his converſation: whatever were his parts and accompliſhments, he had no reading, and could furniſh no intelligence to ſuch a mind as Johnſon's: his vagrant courſe of life had made him acquainted with the town and its vices; and though I am not warranted to ſay, that Johnſon was infected with them, I have reaſon to think, that he reflected with as little approbation on the hours he ſpent with Savage as on any period of his life.

Doubtleſs there is in the example and converſation of ſome men a power that faſcinates, and ſuſpends the operation of our own will: to this power in Savage, which conſiſted in the gentleneſs of his manners, the elegance of his diſcourſe, and the vivacity of his imagination, we muſt attribute the aſcendant which he maintained over the affections of

Johnſon,

Johnſon, and the inability of the latter to purſue the ſuggeſtions of his own ſuperior underſtanding. To the purpoſe of this ſentiment, I am tempted to relate a fact which Mr. Garrick once communicated to me in converſation, who, ſpeaking of the irreſiſtible charm of engaging manners, told me, that being an actor at Drury-lane theatre, under Mr. Fleetwood, the patentee thereof, whoſe extravagances rendered him incapable of fulfilling his engagements, his ſalary became deeply in arrear, and he began to feel the want of money: in anſwer to his many applications for payment, he had obtained promiſes, and even oaths; but theſe had been ſo often broken, that, preſſed by neceſſity, and provoked by ill uſage, he was determined to have recourſe to law for payment: he however thought it but right to declare his intention; and, for that purpoſe, invited himſelf to breakfaſt with Fleetwood. 'It was on a 'Sunday,' ſaid Mr. Garrick, 'that he appointed to 'ſee me; he received me with great courteſy and 'affability, and entertained me for ſome hours with 'diſcourſe, foreign to the ſubject of our meeting, but 'ſo bewitching in its kind, that it deprived me of the 'power of telling him that he owed me ſix hundred 'pounds, and that my neceſſities compelled me to de-'mand it.'

The intimacy between Savage and Johnſon continued till the beginning of the year 1738, when the diſtreſſes of the former, and the ceſſation, by the death of Queen Caroline, of a penſion, which, for ſome years, ſhe had directed to be paid him, moved ſome of his friends to a ſubſcription for his ſupport, in a place ſo far diſtant from the metropolis, as to be out of the reach of its temptations; where he might beget

new habits, and indulge himſelf in thoſe exerciſes of his imagination, which had been the employment of his happieſt hours. The place fixed on for his reſidence was Swanſea in Wales; but as it was ſome time before the ſubſcription could be completed, his retirement thither was retarded.

In this ſuſpenſe of Savage's fortunes, Johnſon ſeems to have confirmed himſelf in a reſolution of quarrelling with the adminiſtration of public affairs, and becoming a ſatiriſt on the manners of the times; and becauſe he thought he ſaw a reſemblance between his own and thoſe of Rome in its decline, he choſe to expreſs his ſenſe of modern depravity by an imitation of the third ſatire of Juvenal, in which, with great judgment, and no leſs aſperity, he drew a parallel between the corruptions of each, and exemplified it by characters, then ſubſiſting. In it he anticipated the departure of his friend Thales, i. e. Savage, whom he deſcribes as

'——— reſolv'd, from vice and London far,
'To breathe, in diſtant fields, a purer air;
'And, fix'd in Cambria's ſolitary ſhore,
'Give to St. David one true Briton more.'

To this exerciſe of his talent he was, probably, excited by the ſucceſs of Mr. Pope, who had done the ſame by ſome of the ſatires of Horace, and had vindicated, by the example of Dr. Donne a divine, that ſpecies of writing, even in Chriſtian times, from the imputation of malevolence and the want of that charity 'which is not eaſily provoked, and endureth all 'things.'

The

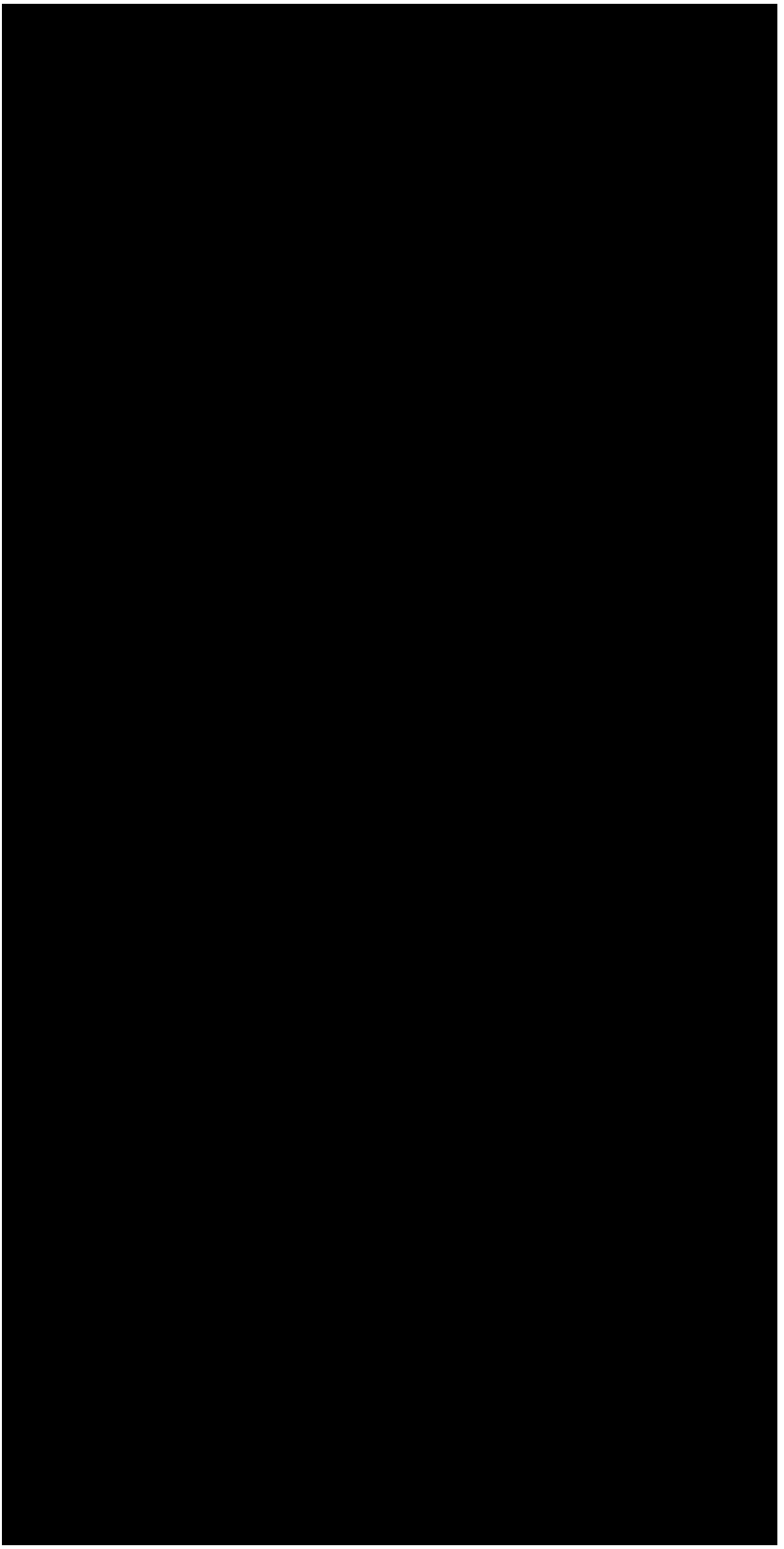
The poem was finiſhed, as appears by a manuſcript note of the author in his own corrected copy, in 1738. While he was writing it, he lodged in an upper room of a houſe in Exeter ſtreet, behind Exeter 'change, inhabited by one Norris, a ſtay-maker; a particular which would have been hardly worth noticing, but that it, in ſome meaſure, beſpeaks his circumſtances at the time, and accounts for his having, more than once, mentioned in the poem, and that with ſeeming abhorrence, the dungeons of the Strand. It is not unlikely that his averſion to ſuch an abode was increaſed by the reflection on that diſtreſs, which by this time had brought his wife to town, and obliged her to participate in the inconveniences of a dwelling too obſcure to invite reſort, and to be a witneſs of the difficulties with which he was ſtruggling.

Having completed his poem, he looked round for a bookſeller, to whom, with a likelihood of obtaining the value of it, he might treat for the ſale of it. His friend Cave, in reſpect of publications, was a haberdaſher of ſmall wares; the greateſt of his undertakings being a tranſlation of Du Halde's Hiſtory of China, which was never completed.

Johnſon thinking him a man for his purpoſe, made him an offer of his poem, in a letter in which, with great art, but without the leaſt violation of truth, he conceals that himſelf was the author of it. The letter I here inſert, as alſo another of his on the ſame ſubject.

'SIR,

'When I took the liberty of writing to you a few 'days ago, I did not expect a repetition of the ſame 'pleaſure



'diſtreſs, but (though it be in compariſon of the other 'motives of very ſmall account) oblige in a very ſen-'ſible manner, Sir,

'Your very humble ſervant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

'SIR, Monday, No. 6, Caſtle-ſtreet.

'I am to return you thanks for the preſent you 'were ſo kind to ſend me, and to intreat that you 'will be pleaſed to inform me, by the Penny-Poſt, 'whether you reſolve to print the poem. If you 'pleaſe to ſend it me by the poſt, with a note to 'Dodſley, I will go and read the lines to him, that 'we may have his conſent to put his name in the 'title page. As to the printing, if it can be ſet im-'mediately about, I will be ſo much the author's 'friend, as not to content myſelf with mere ſolicita-'tions in his favour. I propoſe, if my calculation be 'near the truth, to engage for the reimburſement of 'all that you ſhall loſe by an impreſſion of 500, pro-'vided, as you very generouſly propoſe, that the pro-'fit, if any, be ſet aſide for the author's uſe, excepting 'the preſent you made, which, if he be a gainer, it is 'fit he ſhould repay. I beg you will let one of your 'ſervants write an exact account of the expence of ſuch 'an impreſſion, and ſend it with the poem, that I 'may know what I engage for. I am very ſenſible, 'from your generoſity on this occaſion, of your regard 'to learning, even in its unhappieſt ſtate; and cannot 'but think ſuch a temper deſerving of the gratitude 'of thoſe, who ſuffer ſo often from a contrary diſpo-'ſition. 'I am, Sir,

'Your moſt humble ſervant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

Johnſon

Johnſon and Dodſley were ſoon agreed; the price aſked by the one and aſſented to by the other, was, as I have been informed, fifty pounds; a reward for his labour and ingenuity, that induced Johnſon ever after to call Dodſley his patron. It is pretty certain that in his offer of the poem to Dodſley, Cave ſtipulated for the printing of it, for it came abroad in the year above-mentioned with the name of Cave as the printer, though without that of the author. Lord Lyttelton, the inſtant it was publiſhed, carried it in rapture to Mr. Pope, who, having read it, commended it highly, and was very importunate with Dodſley to know the author's name; but, that being a ſecret the latter was bound not to reveal, Pope aſſured him that he could not long be unknown, recollecting, perhaps, a paſſage recorded of Milton, who, ſeeing a beautiful young lady paſs him whom he never had ſeen before, turned to look at her, and ſaid, 'Whoever thou art, thou 'canſt not long be concealed.'

The topics of this ſpirited poem, ſo far as it reſpects this country, or the time when it was written, are evidently drawn from thoſe weekly publications, which, to anſwer the view of a malevolent faction, firſt created, and for ſome years ſupported, a diſtinction between the intereſts of the government and the people, under the ſeveral denominations of the court and the country parties: theſe publications were carried on under the direction of men, profeſſing themſelves to be whigs and friends of the people, in a paper intitled, 'The Country Journal or the Craftſman,' now deſervedly forgotten, the end whereof was, to blow the flame of national diſcontent, to delude the honeſt and well-meaning people of this country into a belief that the miniſter

was

ſhip of Appleby ſchool in Leiceſterſhire was become vacant, he, by the advice of Sir Thomas Grieſly a Derbyſhire baronet, and other friends, went to Appleby, and offered himſelf as a candidate for that employment; but the ſtatutes of the ſchool requiring, that the perſon choſen ſhould be a Maſter of Arts, his application was checked. To get over this difficulty, he found means to obtain from the late Lord Gower, a letter to a friend of his, ſoliciting his intereſt with Dean Swift towards procuring him a maſter's degree from the univerſity of Dublin: the letter has appeared in print, but with a miſtaken date of the year, viz. 1737; for it mentions Johnſon's being the author of the poem of 'London,' which, as I have above fixed it, was written in 1738. It is as follows:

'SIR,

'Mr. Samuel Johnſon, (author of London a ſatire, 'and ſome other poetical pieces,) is a native of this 'country, and much reſpected by ſome worthy gen- 'tlemen in his neighbourhood, who are truſtees of a 'charity ſchool now vacant, the certain ſalary of which 'is 60l. per year, of which they are deſirous to make 'him maſter; but, unfortunately, he is not capable of 'receiving their bounty, which would make him hap- 'py for life, by not being a Maſter of Arts, which, by 'the ſtatutes of this ſchool, the maſter of it muſt 'be.

'Now theſe gentlemen do me the honour to think, 'that I have intereſt enough in you to prevail upon 'you to write to Dean Swift, to perſuade the univerſity 'of Dublin to ſend a diploma to me, conſtituting this 'poor man Maſter of Arts in their univerſity. They

'highly

'highly extol the man's learning and probity, and will 'not be perſuaded that the univerſity will make any 'difficulty of conferring ſuch a favour upon a ſtranger, 'if he is recommended by the Dean. They ſay he 'is not afraid of the ſtricteſt examination, though he 'is of ſo long a journey, and will venture it if the 'Dean thinks it neceſſary, chooſing rather to die upon 'the road, than to be ſtarved to death in tranſlating 'for bookſellers, which has been his only ſubſiſtence 'for ſome time paſt.

'I fear there is more difficulty in this affair than 'theſe good-natured gentlemen apprehend, eſpecially, 'as their election cannot be delayed longer than the '11th of next month. If you ſee this matter in the 'ſame light that it appears to me, I hope you will 'burn this and pardon me for giving you ſo much 'trouble about an impracticable thing; but if you 'think there is a probability of obtaining the favour 'aſked, I am ſure your humanity and propenſity to 'relieve merit in diſtreſs, will incline you to ſerve the 'poor man, without my adding any more to the trou-'ble I have already given you, than aſſuring you that 'I am, with great truth,

'Sir,

'Your faithful humble ſervant,

'Trentham, Auguſt 1, 1737. GOWER.'

If ever Johnſon had reaſon to lament the ſhortneſs of his ſtay at the univerſity, it was now. The want of an honour, which, after a ſhort efflux of years, is conferred almoſt of courſe, was, at this criſis, his greateſt misfortune: it ſtood between him and the acquiſition of an income of 60l. a year, in a country and at a

time that made it equivalent to a much larger ſum at preſent.

The letter of Lord Gower failing of its effect, Johnſon returned to London, reſolving on a vigorous effort to ſupply his wants: this was a tranſlation into Engliſh of Father Paul's Hiſtory of the Council of Trent*: the former by Sir Nathaniel Brent, though a faithful one, being, in the judgment of ſome perſons, rather obſolete. Johnſon was well enough ſkilled in the Italian language for the undertaking, and was encouraged to it by many of his friends; as namely, Mr. Walmſley, Mr. Caſlon the letter-founder, Mr. [afterwards Dr.] Birch, and others; but he choſe to make it a joint project, and take Cave into the adventure, who, as the work proceeded, advanced him ſmall ſums, at two or three guineas a week, amounting together to near fifty pounds.†

It happened at this time that another perſon of the ſame chriſtian and ſurname, the then keeper of Dr. Teniſon's library in St. Martin's pariſh, had engaged in the like deſign, and was ſupported therein by Dr. Zachary Pearce, and alſo by moſt of the biſhops, and by many of the dignified clergy, which being the caſe, the ſolicitations in behalf of the two verſions croſſed

* Vide Gent. Mag. for Jan. 1785, page 6.

† Propoſals for publiſhing it were advertiſed in the Weekly Miſcellany of 21ſt Oct. 1738, in the following terms: 'Juſt publiſhed, propoſals for printing the Hiſtory of the Council of Trent, tranſlated from the Italian of Father Paul Sarpi, with the author's life, and notes Theological, Hiſtorical and Critical, from the French edition of Dr. Le Courayer. To which are added, obſervations on the hiſtory and notes; and illuſtrations from various authors, both printed and manuſcript, by S. Johnſon, in two volumes quarto.'

each other, and rendered both abortive. Twelve quarto ſheets of Johnſon's were printed off; but what became of the other is not known. This diſappointment, however mortifying, did not hinder Johnſon from proſecuting a part of his original deſign, and writing the life of the author, which, with the aſſiſtance of a life of him, written by an Italian nobleman, whoſe name I could never learn, and publiſhed in a cloſely printed duodecimo, he was enabled to complete, and in an abridgment to inſert in Cave's Magazine.

Various other projects about this time did he form of publications on literary ſubjects, which, in a ſubſequent page, by the help of a liſt in his own hand-writing, I have enumerated, but they were either blaſted by other publications of a ſimilar nature, or abandoned for want of encouragement.

However, that he might not be totally unemployed, Cave engaged him to undertake a tranſlation of an Examen of Pope's Eſſay on Man, written by Mr. Crouſaz, a profeſſor in Switzerland, who had acquired ſome eminence by a treatiſe on Logic of his writing, and alſo, by his Examen de Pyrrhoniſme; and of whom Johnſon, after obſerving that he was no mean antagoniſt, has given this character:---'His mind was one 'of thoſe in which philoſophy and piety are happily 'united. He was accuſtomed to argument and diſquiſition, and perhaps was grown too deſirous of detecting faults, but his intention was always right, his opinions were ſolid, and his religion pure. His inceſſant vigilance for the promotion of piety diſpoſed him to look with diſtruſt upon all metaphyſical ſyſtems of Theology, and all ſchemes of virtue and happineſs purely rational; and therefore, it was not long

'before he was perſuaded that the poſitions of Pope, 'as they terminated for the moſt part in natural reli- 'gion, were intended to draw mankind away from 'Revelation, and to repreſent the whole courſe of 'things as a neceſſary concatenation of indiſſoluble 'fatality; and it is undeniable, that in many paſſages, 'a religious eye may eaſily diſcover expreſſions not 'very favourable to morals or to liberty.'*

The reputation of the Eſſay on Man ſoon after its publication invited a tranſlation of it into French, which was undertaken and completed by the Abbé Reſnel, and falling into the hands of Crouſaz, drew from him firſt a general cenſure of the principles maintained in the poem, and afterwards, a commentary thereon containing particular remarks on every paragraph. The former of theſe it was that Johnſon tranſlated, as appears by the following letter of his to Cave, which is rendered ſomewhat remarkable by his ſtiling himſelf *Impranſus*.

'Dear Sir,

'I am pretty much of your opinion, that the Com- 'mentary cannot be proſecuted with any appearance 'of ſucceſs; for, as the names of the authors con- 'cerned are of more weight in the performance than 'its own intrinſic merit, the public will be ſoon ſatis- 'fied with it. And I think the Examen ſhould be 'puſhed forward with the utmoſt expedition. Thus, "This day, &c. An Examen of Mr. Pope's eſſay, &c. "containing a ſuccinct account of the philoſophy of "Mr. Leibnitz on the ſyſtem of the Fataliſts, with a

* Life of Pope among the poets.

"confutation of their opinions, and an illuſtration of "the doctrine of Free-will," with what elſe you think 'proper.

'It will, above all, be neceſſary to take notice, 'that it is a thing diſtinct from the Commentary.

'I was ſo far from imagining they [the compoſitors] 'ſtood ſtill, that I conceived them to have a good deal 'beforehand, and therefore was leſs anxious in pro- 'viding them more. But if ever they ſtand ſtill on 'my account, it muſt doubtleſs be charged to me; 'and whatever elſe will be reaſonable I ſhall not op- 'poſe; but beg a ſuſpenſe of judgment till morning, 'when I muſt intreat you to ſend me a dozen propoſals, 'and you ſhall then have copy to ſpare.

'I am, Sir, your's, *impranſus*,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

Johnſon's tranſlation of the Examen was printed by Cave, and came abroad, but without a name, in November, 1738, bearing the title of, 'An Examination 'of Mr. Pope's Eſſay on Man, containing a ſuccinct 'view of the ſyſtem of the Fataliſts, and a confutation 'of their opinions; with an illuſtration of the doctrine 'of Free-Will, and an enquiry what view Mr. Pope 'might have in touching upon the Leibnitzian Philo- 'ſophy and Fataliſm. By Mr. Crouſaz, profeſſor of 'Philoſophy and Mathematics at Lauſanne, &c.'

All the world knows that the Eſſay on Man was compoſed from the dictamen of Lord Bolingbroke, and it is little leſs notorious that Pope was but meanly ſkilled in that ſort of learning to which the ſubject of his poem related: he had not been converſant with the writings or opinions of the different ſects of phi-

loſophers of whom ſome maintained and others denied the freedom of the will, and knew little more of the arguments for and againſt human liberty in oppoſition to what is called Neceſſity, than he was able to gather from the controverſy between Anthony Collins and his opponents, or that between Dr. Clarke and Leibnitz. He was therefore unable to defend what he had written, and ſtood a dead mark for his adverſaries to ſhoot at. Fortunate for him it was, that at this criſis there was living ſuch a perſon as Mr. Warburton; and Pope had for all the remainder of his life reaſon to reflect with pleaſure on the accident that brought them acquainted, and which I will preſently relate.

Warburton's origin and riſe into literary reputation are pretty well known. He had ſerved a clerkſhip to an attorney the town-clerk of Newark upon Trent, and for a ſhort time was himſelf a practiſer in that profeſſion; but having a ſtrong propenſity to learning, he determined to quit it, and purſue a courſe of ſtudy ſuch as was neceſſary to qualify him for the miniſterial function, and having completed it, got admitted into holy orders, and ſettled in London, where, upon his arrival, he became acquainted with ſome of the inferior wits, Concannen, Theobald, and others the enemies of Pope, and adopted many of their ſentiments. In a letter to the former of theſe he writes, 'Dryden I 'obſerve borrows for want of leiſure, and Pope for 'want of genius; Milton out of pride, and Addi-'ſon out of modeſty;' further he aſſiſted Theobald with notes on many paſſages in his edition of Shakeſpeare, which charge Mr. Pope with ignorance, and incapacity for the office of an editor.

But

But leaving literal criticiſm to theſe his firſt aſſociates, Warburton betook himſelf to ſtudies of greater importance, and before the publication of the Examen of the Eſſay on Man, had made himſelf known, as an original thinker, by his Divine Legation of Moſes, a work which, as it met with great oppoſition, gave him occaſion to diſplay a ſingular talent in controverſy. As there was nothing congenial in the minds of him and Pope, they neither of them ſought the acquaintance of the other, but mere chance brought them together, a chance ſo propitious to Warburton's fortunes that it became an epoch in his life, and was the leading circumſtance to his becoming the owner of a fair eſtate, and his promotion to a biſhopric.

The friendſhip of theſe two perſons had its commencement in that bookſeller's ſhop which is ſituate on the Weſt ſide of the gate-way leading down the Inner Temple-lane. Warburton had ſome dealings with Jacob Robinſon the publiſher, to whom the ſhop belonged, and may be ſuppoſed to have been drawn there on buſineſs; Pope might have a call of the like kind: however that be, there they met, and entering into a converſation which was not ſoon ended, conceived a mutual liking, and as we may ſuppoſe, plighted their faith to each other. The fruit of this interview and the ſubſequent communications of the parties was, the publication, in November 1739, of a pamphlet with this title, 'A Vindication of Mr. Pope's Eſſay 'on Man. By the author of the Divine Legation 'of Moſes. Printed for J. Robinſon.'

Whether or not Crouſaz ever replied to this vindication, I am not at leiſure to enquire. I incline to

think he did not, and that the controverſy reſted on the foot of the Examen and the Commentary on the one part, and the Vindication on the other. In the year 1743, Johnſon took it into his head to review the argument, and became a moderator in a diſpute which, on the ſide of Warburton, had been conducted with a great degree of that indignation and contempt of his adverſary, which is viſible in moſt of his writings. This he did in two letters ſeverally publiſhed in the Gentleman's Magazine for the months of March and November in the above year, with a promiſe of more, but proceeded no farther than to ſtate the ſentiments of Mr. Crouſaz reſpecting the poem, from a ſeeming conviction that he was diſcuſſing an unintereſting queſtion.

Johnſon had already tried his hand at political ſatire, and had ſucceeded in it; and though no new occaſion offered, he was either urged by diſtreſs or prompted by that clamour againſt the miniſter which in the year 1739 was become very loud, to join in the popular cry, and as it were, to carry war into his own quarters. This he did in a pamphlet, intitled, 'Marmor Norfol-'cienſe, or an eſſay on an ancient prophetical inſcrip-'tion, in Monkiſh rhyme, lately diſcovered near Lynn 'in Norfolk, by Probus Britannicus.'

This mode of ſatire, the publication of prophecies adapted to the incidents of the time when written, and not ſo genuine as that of Nixon, the Cheſhire ſeer, which ſome thought was fulfilled in 1745, is not an invention ſo new as many may think. In ſome inſtances it has been a mere exerciſe of wit; in others it has been uſed as a means to excite a people to ſedition.

ſedition. Under the firſt claſs is noted that mentioned by Lord Bacon;

'When Hempe is ſpun,
'England's done;'

whereby, as his lordſhip ſays, it was generally conceived, that after the princes had reigned which had the principal letters of that word Hempe, (which were Henry, Edward, Mary, Philip and Elizabeth) England ſhould come to utter confuſion; which, adds he, thanks be to God, is verified only in the change of name, for the king's ſtile is now no more, of England, but of Britain. Of the latter claſs of feigned prophecies many have, within theſe few years, been publiſhed by authors who had not wit enough to put them into verſe.

The inſcription mentioned in the title-page of the Marmor Norfolcienſe, as alſo the relation of the manner of finding it, are, as will be readily ſuppoſed, equally fictitious, as the ſole end of writing and publiſhing it was to give occaſion for a comment, which ſhould concentrate all the topics of popular diſcontent: accordingly it is inſinuated, becauſe an act of parliament had then lately paſſed, by which it was enacted that all law proceedings ſhould be in Engliſh, that therefore few lawyers underſtood Latin; and the people are taught to look on the deſcendants of the Princeſs Sophia as intruders of yeſterday, receiving an eſtate by voluntary grant, and erecting thereon a claim of hereditary right. The explanation of the prophecy, which is all ironical, reſolves itſelf into an invective againſt a ſtanding army, a ridicule of the balance of power, complaints of the inactivity of the Britiſh lion, and that the Hanover horſe was ſuffered to ſuck his blood.

A publication ſo inflammatory as this, could hardly eſcape the notice of any government, under which the legal idea of a libel might be ſuppoſed to exiſt. The principles it contained were ſuch as the Jacobites of the time openly avowed; and warrants were iſſued and meſſengers employed to apprehend the author, who, though he had forborne to ſubſcribe his name to the pamphlet, the vigilance of thoſe in purſuit of him had diſcovered. To elude the ſearch after him, he, together with his wife, took an obſcure lodging in a houſe in Lambeth marſh, and lay there concealed till the ſcent after him was grown cold.

In the ſame year, 1739, an event aroſe that gave occaſion to Johnſon again to exerciſe his talent of ſatire; viz. the refuſal of a licence for acting a tragedy intitled, 'Guſtavus Vaſa, or the deliverer of his country,' written by Henry Brooke, to account for which ſeeming injury, ſome previous information, ſuch as I am now about to give, appears neceſſary.

The places for theatrical repreſentations in this country were anciently the king's palace, and the manſions of the nobility; but, as the love of them increaſed, taverns and other public houſes in different parts of the city and ſuburbs, were fitted up for the purpoſe, and called play-houſes. The uſurpation and the principles of the times put a ſtop to ſtage entertainments: at the reſtoration they were revived, and the places for repreſentation conſtructed in the form of theatres: their number, at no time after that period, exceeded four, and in the year 1728, and long before, it was reduced to three, namely, Drury lane, Lincoln's-inn fields, and the French playhouſe in the Hay-market. In that year,

year, a man, of the name of Odell, took a throwſter's ſhop in Ayliffe ſtreet, Goodman's fields, and collecting together a number of ſtrolling players of both ſexes, opened it as a theatre. Its contiguity to the city, ſoon made it a place of great reſort, and what was apprehended from the advertiſement of plays to be exhibited in that quarter of the town, ſoon followed: the adjacent houſes became taverns, in name, but in truth they were houſes of lewd reſort *; and the former occupiers of them, uſeful manufacturers and induſtrious artificers, were driven to ſeek elſewhere for a reſidence. In the courſe of the entertainments of this place, the manager ventured to exhibit ſome few new plays; among the reſt a tragedy, intitled, 'King Charles the 'Firſt,' containing ſentiments ſuited to the characters of republicans, ſectaries and enthuſiaſts, and a ſcenical repreſentation of the events of that prince's diſaſtrous reign, better forgotten than remembered. Sober perſons thought that the revival of the memory of paſt tranſactions of ſuch a kind as theſe were, would ſerve no good purpoſe, but, on the contrary, perpetuate that enmity between the friends to and opponents of our eccleſiaſtical and civil eſtabliſhment, which they

* I once, while I was chairman of the Middleſex ſeſſions, tried an indictment for a riot committed in one of theſe coffee-houſes, and in the courſe of the evidence diſcovered, that it was kept by a woman, a ſtiff quaker, and was ſtrangely puzzled to reconcile in my mind ſuch a ſolecifm in manners as the profeſſion of purity with the practice of lewdneſs. She appeared in court in the plain and neat garb of the people of that perſuaſion, and was the wife of a ſeafaring man, who being abroad, had left her to purſue this lawleſs occupation. I reproved her for her courſe of life, but could not make her ſenſible that it was ſcandalous.

had

had heretofore excited; and for ſuffering ſuch repreſentations as theſe, they execrated not ſo much the author as the manager. In this inſtance, the indignation of the public was ill-directed: the arguments ariſing from this ſuppoſed abuſe of hiſtrionical liberty were not local; they proved too much, and rather applied to ſtage entertainments in general than to the conduct of a particular manager.

But others looked on this new-erected theatre with an eye more penetrating: the merchants of London, then a grave ſagacious body of men, found that it was a temptation to idleneſs and to pleaſure that their clerks could not reſiſt: they regretted to ſee the corruptions of Covent-garden extended, and the ſeats of induſtry hold forth allurements to vice and debauchery. The principal of theſe was Sir John Barnard, a wiſe and venerable man, and a good citizen: he, as a magiſtrate, had for ſome time been watching for ſuch information as would bring the actors at Goodman's-fields playhouſe within the reach of the vagrant laws; but none was laid before him that he could, with prudence, act upon. At length, however, an opportunity offered, which he not only embraced, but made an admirable uſe of: Mr. Henry Fielding, then a young barriſter without practice, a dramatic poet, and a patriot, under the extreme preſſure of neceſſity, had, in the year 1736, written a comedy, or a farce, we may call it either or both, intitled, 'Paſquin,' a dramatic ſatire on the times, and brought it on the ſtage of the little playhouſe in the Hay-market, which, being calculated to encourage popular clamour, and containing in it many reflections on the public councils, furniſhed reaſons for bringing a bill into the houſe of commons for prohibiting

the acting of any interlude, tragedy, comedy, opera, y, farce, &c. without the authority of his Majeſty's ers-patent or a licence from the lord-chamberlain. this bill a clauſe was inſerted on the motion of Sir in Barnard, and a very judicious one it was, by ich it was made penal, even with any ſuch patent or nce, to act or repreſent any ſuch interlude, &c. ny part of Great Britain, except in the city of Weſt- nſter and ſuch other places as his Majeſty, in perſon, uld reſide in.

Before 1737, the year in which this bill was brought the property of Goodman's-fields playhouſe had ſed into the hands of Mr. Henry Giffard, who, en- raged by a ſubſcription, pulled it down, and, under : direction of Shephard, the architect, the ſame that erwards built Covent-garden theatre, had erected a w one. This man, while the bill was depending, pe- oned againſt it, and, in his printed caſe, repreſented : injury he was likely to ſuſtain: all the ſpecious ar- ments of the great ſums he had expended on the pur- aſe of the houſe, and rebuilding it, in ſcenes, cloaths, :. were urged with their utmoſt force, and his right an equivalent ſtated; but all to no effect: the bill ſſed, and the ſtatute is now part of the law of the d. It is true, an evaſion of it was afterwards con- ved by an advertiſement of a concert, with a play ren gratis, but that ſubterfuge was ſoon aban- ned.

The operation of this ſtatute was two-fold; it ſub- ted theatrical repreſentations to a licence, and ſup- eſſed a nuiſance. And here let me obſerve, that hough of plays it is ſaid that they teach morality, and

of

of the ſtage that it is the mirror of human life, theſe aſſertions are mere declamation, and have no foundation in truth or experience: on the contrary, a playhouſe, and the regions about it, are the very hot-beds of vice: how elſe comes it to paſs that no ſooner is a playhouſe opened in any part of the kingdom, than it becomes ſurrounded by an halo of brothels? Of this truth, the neighbourhood of the place I am now ſpeaking of has had experience; one pariſh alone, adjacent thereto, having to my knowledge, expended the ſum of 1300l. in proſecutions for the purpoſe of removing thoſe inhabitants, whom, for inſtruction in the ſcience of human life, the playhouſe had drawn thither.

Mr. Brooke, the author above-mentioned, having with his eyes open, and the ſtatute of the tenth of George the ſecond ſtaring him in the face, written a tragedy, in which, as will be preſently ſhewn, under pretence of a laudable zeal for the cauſe of liberty, he inculcates principles, not only anti-monarchical, but ſcarcely conſiſtent with any ſyſtem of civil ſubordination; what wonder is it, that, under a monarchical government, a licence for ſuch a theatrical repreſentation ſhould be refuſed? or that ſuch a refuſal ſhould be followed by a prohibition of the acting it?

This interpoſition of legal authority was looked upon by the author's friends, in which number were included all the Jacobites in the kingdom, as an infraction of a natural right, and as affecting the cauſe of liberty. To expreſs their reſentment of this injury, they adviſed him to ſend it to the preſs, and by a ſubſcription to the publication, of near a thouſand perſons, encouraged others to the like attempts. By means of the printed copy any one is enabled to judge of its general

general tendency, and, by reflecting on the ſentiments inculcated in the following ſpeeches therein to be found, to meaſure the injuſtice done him:

Is it of fate that he who aſſumes a crown
Throws off humanity?

Beyond the ſweeping of the proudeſt train
That ſhades a monarch's heel, I prize theſe weeds.

——————— our Dalecarlians
Have oft been known to give a law to kings.

Divide and conquer is the ſum of politics.

——————— if thou think'ſt
That empire is of titled birth or blood;
That nature, in the proud behalf of one,
Shall diſenfranchiſe all her lordly race,
And bow her general iſſue to the yoke
Of private domination, &c.

——————— thou art the miniſter,
The reverend monitor of vice.

The ſence of virtue is a chief's beſt caution;
And the firm ſurety of my people's hearts
Is all the guard that e'er ſhall wait Guſtavus.

The dedication to the play, addreſſed to the ſubſcribers, gives the reader to underſtand, that the author had 'ſtudied the ancient laws of his country, 'though not converſant with her preſent political ſtate,' that he is 'a friend to national liberty and perſonal free-'dom,' (meaning by the firſt, 'a ſtate reſulting from 'virtue or reaſon ruling in a breaſt ſuperior to appetite 'and paſſion,' and, by the laſt, 'a ſecurity ariſing from 'the nature of a well-ordered conſtitution, for thoſe ad-

'vantages

'vantages and privileges that each man has a right to 'by contributing as a member to the weal of that com-'munity;') theſe declarations are interſperſed with re-flections on the lord-chamberlain, and a complaint that his treatment of the author 'was ſingular and un-'precedented;' after which follows an effuſion of patri-otic ſentiments ſerving to ſhew, that a monarch or head of ſuch a conſtitution as he above has deſcribed, is 'ſceptered in the hearts of his people.'

'Upon occaſion of this publication, Johnſon was em-ployed by one Corbet, a bookſeller of ſmall note, to take up the cauſe of this injured author, and he did it in a pamphlet, intitled, 'A Compleat Vindication of 'the Licenſers of the Stage from the malicious and 'ſcandalous aſperſions of Mr. Brooke, author of 'Guſtavus Vaſa.' 4to. 1739.

Criticiſm would be ill employed in a minute examination of the Marmor Norfolcienſe, and the Vindication of the Licenſers: in general it may ſuffice to ſay that they are both ironical, that they diſplay neither learning nor wit, and that in neither of them is there to be diſcovered a ſingle ray of that brightneſs which beams ſo ſtrongly in the author's moral and political eſſays. Did it become a man of his diſcernment, endowed with ſuch powers of reaſoning and eloquence as he poſſeſſed, to adopt vulgar prejudices, or, in the cant of the oppoſition, to clamor againſt place-men, and penſioners and ſtanding armies? to ridicule the apprehenſion of that invaſion in favour of the pretender, which himſelf, but a few years after became a witneſs to, or to compare the improbability of ſuch an event with that of a general inſurrection of all who were prohibited the uſe of gin?

Of

Of all the modes of ſatire, I know none ſo feeble as that of uninterrupted irony. The reaſon of this ſeems to be, that in that kind of writing the author is compelled to advance poſitions which no reader can think he believes, and to put queſtions that can be anſwered in but one way, and that ſuch an one as thwarts the ſenſe of the propounder. Of this kind of interrogatories the pamphlet I am ſpeaking of ſeems to be an example; 'Is the man without penſion or 'place to ſuſpect the impartiality or the judgment of 'thoſe who are entruſted with the adminiſtration of 'public affairs? Is he, when the law is not ſtrictly 'obſerved in regard to him, to think himſelf aggrieved, 'to tell his ſentiments in print, to aſſert his claim to 'better uſage, and fly for redreſs to another tri-'bunal?'

Who does not ſee that to theſe ſeveral queries the anſwer muſt be in the affirmative? and, if ſo, the point of the writer's wit is, in this inſtance, blunted, and his argument baffled.

In the courſe of this mock vindication of power, Johnſon has taken a wide ſcope, and adopted all the vulgar topics of complaint as they were vented weekly in the public papers, and in the writings of Bolingbroke, flimſy and malignant as they are. And here let me note a curious ſophiſm of that ſuperficial thinker, which I remember to have ſeen in his celebrated Diſſertation on Parties; but which, not having the book by me, I cite by memory: it is to this purpoſe: 'The 'advocates of the miniſter,' ſays his Lordſhip, 'defy us 'to ſhew, that, under his adminiſtration, any infraction 'had been made of the original contract.' To this we anſwer, that between ſuch an infraction and the loſs of

our

our liberties, there can no point of time intervene; ſuch a cauſe and ſuch an effect being ſo cloſely connected, that we cannot ſee the one till we feel the other.

Such was the conduct of oppoſition at this time, and by ſuch futile arguments as the above were the ſilly people of three kingdoms deluded into a belief, that their liberties were in danger, and that nothing could ſave this country from impending ruin, and that the moſt formidable of all the evils they had to dread, was the continuance of the then adminiſtration, of which they had nothing worſe to ſay than that they hated it.

The truth is, that Johnſon's political prejudices were a miſt that the eye of his judgment could not penetrate: in all the meaſures of government he could ſee nothing right; nor could he be convinced, in his invectives againſt a ſtanding army, as the Jacobites affected to call it, that the peaſantry of a country was not an adequate defence againſt an invaſion of it by an armed force. He almoſt aſſerted in terms, that the ſucceſſion to the crown had been illegally interrupted, and that from whig-politics none of the benefits of government could be expected. He could but juſt endure the oppoſition to the miniſter becauſe conducted on whig principles; and I have heard him ſay, that during the whole courſe of it, the two parties were bidding for the people. At other times, and in the heat of his reſentment, I have heard him aſſert, that, ſince the death of Queen Anne, it had been the policy of the adminiſtration to promote to eccleſiaſtical dignities none but the moſt worthleſs and undeſerving men: nor would he then exclude from this bigotted cenſure thoſe illuſtrious divines, Wake, Gibſon, Sherlock, Butler, Herring, Pearce, and leaſt of all Hoadly;

in

in competition with whom he would ſet Hickes, Brett, Leſlie, and others of the nonjurors, whoſe names are ſcarcely now remembered. From hence it appears, and to his honour be it ſaid, that his principles co-operated with his neceſſities, and that the proſtitution of his talents, taking the term in one and that its worſt ſenſe, could not, in juſtice, be imputed to him.

But there is another, and a leſs criminal ſenſe of the word proſtitution, in which, in common with all who are called authors by profeſſion, he may be ſaid to ſtand in need of an excuſe. When Milton wrote the Paradiſe Loſt, the ſum he received for the copy was not his motive, but was an adventitious benefit that reſulted from the exerciſe of his poetical faculty. In Johnſon's caſe, as well in the inſtances above given as almoſt all the others that occurred during the courſe of his life, the impulſe of genius was wanting: had that alone operated in his choice of ſubjects to write on, mankind would have been indebted to him for a variety of original, intereſting and uſeful compoſitions; and tranſlations of ſome, and new editions of others of the ancient authors. The truth of which aſſertion I think I may ſafely ground on a catalogue of publications projected by him at different periods, and now lying before me, a copy whereof is given below: *

Under

* 'DIVINITY.

'A ſmall book of precepts and directions for piety: the hint 'taken from the directions in the [counteſs of] 'Morton's' [daily] 'exerciſe.

'PHILOSOPHY, HISTORY, and LITERATURE in general.

'Hiſtory of Criticiſm as it relates to judging of authors, from 'Ariſtotle to the preſent age. An account of the riſe and im-

 provements

Under this notion of works written with a view to gain, and thoſe that owe their exiſtence to a more liberal motive, a diſtinction of literary productions ariſes which

' provements of that art; of the different opinions of authors an-
' cient and modern.

' Tranſlation of the Hiſtory of Herodian.

' New edition of Fairfax's Tranſlation of Taſſo, with notes,
' gloſſary, &c.

' Chaucer, a new edition of him, from manuſcripts and old edi-
' tions, with various readings, conjectures, remarks on his lan-
' guage, and the changes it had undergone from the earlieſt times
' to his age, and from his to the preſent. With notes explanatory
' of cuſtoms, &c. and references to Boccace and other authors
' from whom he has borrowed, with an account of the liberties he
' has taken in telling the ſtories, his life, and an exact etymologi-
' cal gloſſary.

' Ariſtotle's Rhetoric, a tranſlation of it into Engliſh.

' A Collection of Letters, tranſlated from the modern writers,
' with ſome account of the ſeveral authors.

' Oldham's Poems, with notes hiſtorical and critical.

' Roſcommon's Poems, with notes.

' Lives of the Philoſophers, written with a polite air, in ſuch a
' manner as may divert as well as inſtruct.

' Hiſtory of the Heathen Mythology, with an explication of the
' fables, both allegorical and hiſtorical, with references to the
' poets.

' Hiſtory of the State of Venice, in a compendious manner.

' Ariſtotle's Ethics, an Engliſh tranſlation of them with notes.

' Geographical Dictionary from the French.

' Hierocles upon Pythagoras, tranſlated into Engliſh, perhaps
' with notes. This is done by Norris.

' A book of Letters upon all kinds of ſubjects.

' Claudian, a new edition of his works, cum notis variorum in
' the manner of Burman.

' Tully's Tuſculan Queſtions, a tranſlation of them.

' Tully de Natura Deorum, a tranſlation of thoſe books.

' Benzo's New Hiſtory of the New World, to be tranſlated.

' Machiavel's Hiſtory of Florence, to be tranſlated.

' Hiſtory

which Johnſon would never allow; on the contrary, to the aſtoniſhment of myſelf who have heard him, and many others, he has frequently declared, that the only

'History of the Revival of Learning in Europe, containing an 'account of whatever contributed to the reſtoration of literature, 'ſuch as controverſies, printing, the deſtruction of the Greek em- 'pire, the encouragement of great men, with the lives of the moſt 'eminent patrons, and moſt eminent early profeſſors of all kinds of 'learning in different countries.

'A Body of Chronology, in verſe, with hiſtorical notes.

'A table of the Spectators, Tatlers, and Guardians, diſtinguiſhed 'by figures into ſix degrees of value, with notes giving the reaſons 'of preference or degradation.

'A Collection of Letters from Engliſh authors, with a preface 'giving ſome account of the writers, with reaſons for ſelection and 'criticiſm upon ſtiles, remarks on each letter, if needful.

'A Collection of Proverbs from various languages:—Jan. 6— '53.

'A Dictionary to the Common Prayer in imitation of Calmet's 'Dictionary of the Bible. March—52.

'A Collection of Stories and Examples like thoſe of Valerius 'Maximus. Jan. 10—53.

'From Ælian, a volume of ſelect ſtories, perhaps from others. 'Jan. 28—53.

'Collection of Travels, Voyages, Adventures, and Deſcriptions 'of Countries.

'Dictionary of Ancient Hiſtory and Mythology.

'Treatiſe on the Study of Polite Literature, containing the hiſ- 'tory of learning, directions for editions, commentaries, &c.

'Maxims, Characters and Sentiments, after the manner of 'Bruyére, collected out of ancient authors, particularly the Greek, 'with Apophthegms.

'Claſſical Miſcellanies, Select Tranſlations from ancient Greek 'and Latin authors.

'Lives of illuſtrious perſons, as well of the active as the learned, 'in imitation of Plutarch.

'Judgment of the learned upon Engliſh authors.

'Poetical Dictionary of the Engliſh tongue.

only true and genuine motive to the writing of books was the aſſurance of pecuniary profit. Notwithſtanding the boldneſs of this aſſertion, there are but few that can be perſuaded to yield to it; and, after all, the beſt apology for Johnſon will be found to conſiſt in his want of a profeſſion, the preſſure of his neceſſities, and the example of ſuch men as Caſtalio, Geſner, and Salmaſius, among foreigners; and Fuller, Howel, L'Eſtrange, Dryden, Chambers, and Hume, not to mention others now living, among ourſelves.

The principle here noted was not only in the above inſtance avowed by Johnſon, but ſeems to have been wrought by him into a habit. He was never greedy of money, but without money could not be ſtimulated to write. I have been told by a clergyman of ſome eminence with whom he had been long acquainted, that, being to preach on a particular occaſion, he applied, as others under a like neceſſity had frequently done, to Johnſon for help. 'I will write a

'Conſiderations upon the preſent ſtate of London.

'Collection of Epigrams, with notes and obſervations.

'Obſervations on the Engliſh language, relating to words, 'phraſe, and modes of Speech.

'Minutiæ Literariæ, Miſcellaneous reflections, criticiſms, emen-'dations, notes.

'Hiſtory of the Conſtitution.

'Compariſon of Philoſophical and Chriſtian Morality by ſen-'tences collected from the moraliſts and fathers.

'Plutarch's Lives in Engliſh, with notes.

'POETRY and works of IMAGINATION.

'Hymn to Ignorance.

'The Palace of Truth—a viſion.

'Catalus, to be tranſlated.

'Prejudice—a poetical eſſay.

'The Palace of Nonſenſe—a viſion.'

'ſermon

'ſermon for thee,' ſaid Johnſon, 'but thou muſt pay 'me for it.'

Yet was he not ſo indifferent to the ſubjects that he was requeſted to write on, as at any time to abandon either his religious or political principles. He would no more have put his name to an Arian or Socinian tract than to a defence of Atheiſm. At the time when 'Faction Detected' came out, a pamphlet of which the late lord Egmont is now generally underſtood to have been the author, Oſborne the bookſeller, held out to him a ſtrong temptation to anſwer it, which he refuſed, being convinced, as he aſſured me, that the charge contained in it was made good, and that the argument grounded thereon was unanſwerable.

Indeed whoever peruſes that maſterly performance muſt be convinced that a ſpirit ſimilar to that which induced the Iſraelites, when under the conduct of their wiſe legiſlator, to cry out 'Ye take too much upon ye,' is the moſt frequent motive to oppoſition, and that whoever hopes to govern a free people by reaſon, is miſtaken in his judgment of human nature. 'He,' ſays Hooker, 'that goeth about to perſuade a people 'that they are not well governed, ſhall never want atten-'tive and favourable hearers:' and the ſame author ſpeaking of legiſlation in general, delivers this as his ſentiment: 'Laws politic ordained for external order and regimen amongſt men are never framed as they ſhould be, unleſs preſuming the will of man to be obſtinate, rebellious and averſe from all obedience unto the ſacred laws of his nature: In a word, unleſs preſuming 'man, in regard of his depraved mind, little better than 'a wild beaſt, they do accordingly provide, notwithſtand-'ing, ſo to frame his outward actions as that they be no 'hindrance unto the common good, for which ſocieties

'were inſtituted. Unleſs they do this they are not per-'fect.' Eccleſ. Pol. Lib. I. Sect. 1. Ibid. Sect. 10.

That theſe were the ſentiments of Johnſon alſo, I am warranted to ſay, by frequent declarations to the ſame purpoſe, which I have heard him make; and to theſe I attribute it, that he ever after acquieſced in the meaſures of government through the ſucceſſion of adminiſtrations.

It has already been mentioned in the account above given of Savage, that the friends of that ill-ſtarred man had ſet on foot a ſubſcription for his ſupport, and that Swanſea was the place they had fixed on for his reſidence: the ſame was completed at the end of the year 1739. Johnſon at that time lodged at Greenwich, and there parted with that friend and companion of his midnight rambles, whom it was never his fortune again to ſee. The event is antedated in the poem of 'London'; but in every particular, except the difference of a year, what is there ſaid of the departure of Thales muſt be underſtood of Savage, and looked upon as true hiſtory. In his life of Savage, Johnſon has mentioned the circumſtances that attended it, and deplored this ſeparation as he would have done a greater misfortune than it proved: that it was, in reality, none, may be inferred from Savage's inability, ariſing from his circumſtances, his courſe of life, and the laxity of his mind, to do good to any one: it is rather to be ſuſpected that his example was contagious, and tended to confirm Johnſon in his indolence and thoſe other evil habits which it was the labour of his life to conquer. They who were witneſſes of Johnſon's perſevering temperance in the article of drinking, for, at leaſt, the latter half of his life, will ſcarcely believe that, during part of the former, he was a lover of wine, that he not only

only indulged himſelf in the uſe of it when he could procure it, but, with a reflex delight, contemplated the act of drinking it, with all the circumſtances that render it grateful to the palate or pleaſing to the eye: in the language of Solomon 'he looked upon the wine 'when it was red, when it gave his colour in the cup, 'and when it moved itſelf aright *.' In contradiction to thoſe, who, having a wife and children, prefer domeſtic enjoyments to thoſe which a tavern affords, I have heard him aſſert, that a tavern-chair was the throne of human felicity.—'As ſoon,' ſaid he, 'as I enter 'the door of a tavern, I experience an oblivion of care, 'and a freedom from ſolicitude †: when I am ſeated, I 'find the maſter courteous, and the ſervants obſequious 'to my call; anxious to know and ready to ſupply my 'wants: wine there exhilarates my ſpirits, and prompts 'me to free converſation and an interchange of diſcourſe 'with thoſe whom I moſt love: I dogmatiſe and am 'contradicted, and in this conflict of opinions and ſen-'timents I find delight.'

How

* Proverbs, chap. xxiii. v. 31.

† It is worthy of remark by thoſe who are curious in obſerving cuſtoms and modes of living, how little theſe houſes of entertainment are now frequented, and what a diminution in their number has been experienced in London and Weſtminſter in a period of about forty years backward. The hiſtory of taverns in this country may be traced back to the time of Hen. IV. for ſo ancient is that of the Boar's Head in Eaſtcheap, the rendezvous of Prince Henry and his lewd companions, as we learn from Shakeſpeare. Of little leſs antiquity is the White Hart without Biſhop's-gate, which now bears in the front of it the date of its erection, 1480.

Anciently there ſtood in Old Palace-yard, Weſtminſter, a tavern known by the ſign of the White Roſe, the ſymbol of the York faction. It was near the chapel of our Lady behind the high altar of the abbey-church. Together with that chapel it was, in 1503,

How far his converſations with Savage might induce him thus to delight in tavern-ſociety, which is often a temptation to greater enormities than exceſſive drinking, cannot now be known, nor would it anſwer any good purpoſe to enquire. It may, nevertheleſs, be conjectured, that whatever habits he had contracted of idleneſs, neglect of his perſon, or indifference in the choice of his company, received no correction or check from ſuch an example as Savage's conduct held forth; and farther it is conjectured, that he would have been leſs troubled with thoſe reflections, which, in his lateſt hours, are known to have given him uneaſineſs, had he never become acquainted with one ſo looſe in his morals, and ſo well acquainted with the vices of the town as this man appears to have been. We are to remember that Johnſon was, at this time, a huſband: can it therefore be ſuppoſed that the ſociety of ſuch a man as Savage had any tendency to improve him in the exerciſe of the domeſtic virtues? nay rather we muſt doubt it, and

pulled down, and on the ſcite of both was erected the chapel of Henry the Seventh. At the reſtoration, the Cavaliers and other adherents to the royal party, for joy of that event were for a time inceſſantly drunk; and from a picture of their manners in Cowley's comedy, Cutter of Coleman-ſtreet, muſt be ſuppoſed to have greatly contributed to the increaſe of taverns. When the frenzy of the times was abated, taverns, eſpecially thoſe about the Exchange, became places for the tranſaction of almoſt all manner of buſineſs: there accounts were ſettled, conveyances executed, and there attornies ſat, as at inns in the country on market days, to receive their clients. In that ſpace near the Royal Exchange which is encompaſſed by Lombard, Gracechurch, part of Biſhop's-gate and Threadneedle ſtreets, the number of taverns was not ſo few as twenty, and on the ſcite of the Bank there ſtood four. At the Crown, which was one of them, it was not unuſual in a morning to draw a butt of mountain, a hundred and twenty gallons, in gallons.

aſcribe

aſcribe to an indifference in the diſcharge of them, ariſing from their nocturnal excurſions, the incident of a temporary ſeparation of Johnſon from his wife, which ſoon took place, and that, while he was in a lodging in Fleet ſtreet, ſhe was harboured by a friend near the Tower. It is true that this ſeparation continued but a ſhort time, and that if indeed his affection, at that inſtant, was alienated from her, it ſoon returned; for his attachment to her appears, by a variety of notes and memorandums concerning her in books that ſhe was accuſtomed to read in, now in my cuſtody, to have been equal to what it ought to be: nay Garrick would often riſque offending them both, by mimicking his mode of gallantry and his uxorious behaviour towards her.

The little profit, or indeed reputation, that accrued to Johnſon by the writing of political pamphlets, led him to think of other exerciſes for his pen. He had, ſo early as 1734, ſolicited employment of Cave; but Cave's correſpondents were ſo numerous that he had little for him till the beginning of the year 1738, when Johnſon conceived a thought of enriching the Magazine with a biographical article, and wrote for it the Life of Father Paul, an abridgement, as it ſeems to be, of that life of him which Johnſon intended to have prefixed to his tranſlation of the Hiſtory of the Council of Trent. The motive to this and other exertions of the ſame talent in the lives of Boerhaave, Blake, Barretier, and other eminent perſons, was his wants, which at one time were ſo preſſing as to induce him in a letter to Cave, hereinbefore inſerted, to intimate to him that he wanted a dinner.

Johnſon

Johnſon who was never deficient in gratitude, for the aſſiſtance which he received from Cave became his friend; and, what was more in Cave's eſtimation than any perſonal attachment whatever, a friend to his Magazine, for he being at this time engaged in a controverſy with a knot of bookſellers the proprietors of a rival publication, the London Magazine, Johnſon wrote and addreſſed to him the following Ode:

AD URBANUM.

Urbane, nullis feſſe laboribus,
Urbane, nullis victe calumniis,
Cui fronte ſertum in erudita
Perpetuo viret et virebit.

Quid moliatur gens imitantium,
Quid et minetur, ſollicitus parum,
Vacare ſolis perge muſis
Juxta animo ſtudiiſque felix.

Linguæ procacis plumbea ſpicula,
Fidens, ſuperbo frange ſilentio;
Victrix per obſtantes catervas
Sedulitas animoſa tendet.

Intende nervos fortis inanibus
Riſurus olim niſibus Æmuli;
Intende jam nervos, habebis
Participes operæ Camœnas.

Non ulla muſis pagina gratior
Quam quæ ſeveris ludicra jungere
Novit fatigatamque nugis
Utilibus recreare mentem.

Texente

Texente nymphis ſerta Lycoride
Roſæ ruborem ſic viola adjuvat
Immiſta, ſic Iris refulget
Æthereis variata fucis.

It was publiſhed in the Magazine for March 1738, and imitated in the following ſtanzas in that for the month of May following:

Hail Urban! indefatigable man,
Unwearied yet by all thy uſeful toil!
Whom num'rous ſlanderers aſſault in vain;
Whom no baſe calumny can put to foil.
But ſtill the laurel on thy learned brow
Flouriſhes fair, and ſhall for ever grow.

What mean the ſervile imitating crew,
What their vain bluſt'ring, and their empty noiſe,
Ne'er ſeek: but ſtill thy noble ends purſue,
Unconquer'd by the rabble's venal voice.
Still to the muſe thy ſtudious mind apply,
Happy in temper as in induſtry.

The ſenſeleſs ſneerings of an haughty tongue,
Unworthy thy attention to engage,
Unheeded paſs: and tho' they mean thee wrong,
By manly ſilence diſappoint their rage.
Aſſiduous diligence confounds its foes,
Reſiſtleſs, tho' malicious crouds oppoſe.

Exert thy powers, nor ſlacken in the courſe,
Thy ſpotleſs fame ſhall quaſh all falſe reports:
Exert thy powers, nor fear a rival's force,
But thou ſhalt ſmile at all his vain efforts;
Thy labours ſhall be crown'd with large ſucceſs;
The muſe's aid thy magazine ſhall bleſs.

No

No page more grateful to th' harmonious nine
Than that wherein thy labours we ſurvey:
Where ſolemn themes in fuller ſplendor ſhine,
(Delightful mixture,) blended with the gay.
Where in improving, various joys we find,
A welcome reſpite to the wearied mind.

Thus when the nymphs in ſome fair verdant mead,
Of various flow'rs a beauteous wreath compoſe,
The lovely violet's azure-painted head
Adds luſtre to the crimſon-bluſhing roſe.
Thus ſplendid Iris, with her varied dye,
Shines in the æther, and adorns the ſky.

May 22, 1738. BRITON.

The provocation that gave riſe to this furious conteſt, as it will preſently appear to have been, was the increaſing demand for Cave's publication, and the check it gave to the ſale of its rival, which at one time was ſo great as to throw back no fewer than ſeventy thouſand copies on the hands of the proprietors. To revenge this injury, the confederate bookſellers gave out, that Sylvanus Urban, whom, for no conceivable reaſon, they dignified with the appellation of Doctor, was become mad, aſſigning as the cauſe of his inſanity, his publication in the Magazine of ſundry mathematical problems, eſſays and queſtions on abſtruſe ſubjects, ſent him by many of his learned correſpondents. Cave who for ſome months had been rebutting the calumnies of his adverſaries, and that with ſuch ſucceſs as provoked them to the outrage above-mentioned, now felt that he had them at mercy. With that ſagacity which we frequently obſerve, but wonder at in men of ſlow parts, he ſeemed to antici-

pate the advice contained in the ſecond and third ſtanzas of Johnſon's ode, and forbore a reply, though not his revenge, which he gratified in ſuch a manner as ſeems to abſolve him from the guilt imputable in moſt caſes to that paſſion; this he did by inſerting as an article of public intelligence in his Hiſtorical Chronicle for the month of February 1738, the following paragraph: "Monday 20. About 8 "o'clock the famous Dr. Urban, having ſome time "paſt been poſſeſſed with a violent frenzy, broke "looſe from his nurſe, and run all through the ſtreets "of London and Weſtminſter diſtributing quack "bills, ſwearing he would go viſit his beautiful "*Garden of Eden*; raving againſt *Common Senſe* *, and "the London Magazine, and ſinging a mad ſong ſet "to muſic by Peter the Wild-Youth; but being at "laſt ſecured, was conveyed to his lodgings in Moor-"fields, where he continues uttering horrid impreca-"tions againſt ſeveral bookſellers and printers. 'Tis "thought this *poor* man's misfortune is owing to his "having lately perplexed himſelf with *biblical queſtions*, "*mathematical problems*, *aſtronomical equations*, *and* "methods to find the longitude." — '*This ſilly para-*'*graph*, *and ſuch like buffoonery*, *inſerted in the news-*'*papers at the charge of the proprietors of the* London 'Magazine, *is all the anſwer given to the remarks on their* '*inimitable preface*, *ſome paſſages of which are quoted in the* '*beginning of this magazine* †.' The

* A party paper ſo intitled.

† In the courſe of many years obſervation I am able to recollect one, and only one, inſtance of this method of treating a ſcurrilous adverſary. An ingenious mechanic, of the name of Newſham, who with the aſſiſtance of the late Dr. Deſaguliers, had made many conſiderable improvements in the conſtruction of engines

The publication in the manner above-mentioned of this ſenſeleſs and malignant fiction, and the care and attention of Cave in the compilation of his magazine, together with the aſſiſtance he received from a variety of ingenious and learned correſpondents, enabled him in a ſhort time to triumph over his rivals, and increaſed the ſale thereof to a number that no other could ever equal.

It was no part of Cave's original deſign to give the debates in either houſe of parliament, but the oppoſition to the miniſter, and the ſpirit that conducted it, had excited in the people a great eagerneſs to know what was going forward in both, and he knew that to gratify that deſire was to encreaſe the demand for his pamphlet. Indeed the experiment had already been made, for the ſpeeches in parliament had for ſome time been given in the Political State of Great Britain, a publication above ſpoken of, and though drawn up by perſons no way equal to ſuch an undertaking, were well received. Theſe for the moſt part were taken by ſtealth, and were compiled from the information of liſteners and the under-officers and door-keepers of either houſe; but Cave had an intereſt

engines for extinguiſhing fires, had obtained a patent for one in particular which conjoined in one and the ſame machine the active powers of both the hands and feet: an ignorant and impudent pretender invaded his right, and the more to exaſperate him, wrote with his own hand and ſubſcribed a letter to Mr. Newſham, made up of the foulеſt abuſe and a diſcuſſion of the principles of mechanics in language, which for its nonſenſe and bad ſpelling conveyed no ideas. Mr. Newſham printed and diſperſed ſome thouſand copies verbatim et literatim of this letter, and without a ſingle remark thereon ſunk the reputation of his adverſary ſo low as ever after to be irretrievable.

with

7

with ſome of the members of both, ariſing from an employment he held in the poſt-office, that of inſpector of the franks, which not only gave him the privilege of ſending his letters free of poſtage, but an acquaintance with, and occaſions of acceſs to many of them.

Of this advantage he was too good a judge of his own intereſt not to avail himſelf. He therefore determined to gratify his readers with as much of this kind of intelligence as he could procure and it was ſafe to communicate: his reſolution was to frequent the two houſes whenever an important debate was likely to come on, and from ſuch expreſſions and particulars in the courſe thereof as could be collected and retained in memory, to give the arguments on either ſide. This reſolution he put into practice in July 1736. His method of proceeding is variouſly reported; but I have been informed by ſome who were much about him, that taking with him a friend or two, he found means to procure for them and himſelf admiſſion into the gallery of the houſe of commons, or to ſome concealed ſtation in the other, and that then they privately took down notes of the ſeveral ſpeeches, and the general tendency and ſubſtance of the arguments. Thus furniſhed, Cave and his aſſociates would adjourn to a neighbouring tavern, and compare and adjuſt their notes, by means whereof and the help of their memories, they became enabled to fix at leaſt the ſubſtance of what they had ſo lately heard and remarked.

The reducing this crude matter into form, was the work of a future day and of an abler hand, viz. Guthrie, the hiſtorian, a writer for the bookſellers, whom Cave retained for the purpoſe: the ſpeeches thus compoſed were given monthly to the public,

and

and peruſed and red with great eagerneſs; thoſe who contemplated them thought they diſcovered in them not merely the political principles, but the ſtile and manner of the ſpeaker; the fact is, that there was little diſcrimination of the latter between the ſpeeches of the beſt and the worſt orators in either aſſembly, and in moſt inſtances the perſons to whom they were aſcribed were here made to ſpeak with more eloquence and even propriety of diction than, in the place of debate they were able to do: Sir John Barnard, for inſtance, a man of no learning or reading, and who by the way had been bred a quaker, had a ſtile little better than an ordinary mechanic, and which abounded with ſuch phraſes as, if ſo be—ſet caſe—and—nobody more ſo—and other ſuch vulgariſms, yet was he made in the magazine to debate in language as correct and poliſhed as that of Sir William Wyndham or Mr. Pulteney; though it muſt be confeſſed that ſo weighty was his matter on ſubjects of commerce, that Sir Robert Walpole, as I have been credibly informed, was uſed to ſay, that when he had anſwered Sir John Barnard, he looked upon that day's buſineſs in the houſe of commons to be as good as over.

The vigorous oppoſition to the miniſter, and the motion in both houſes of the thirteenth of February, 1740-1 to remove him, were a new æra in politics; and, as the debates on that occaſion were warmer than had ever then been known, the drawing them up required, in Cave's opinion, the pen of a more nervous writer than he who had hitherto conducted them. Johnſon, who in his former publications in proſe, had given no very favorable ſpecimens of ſtile, had by this time, by the ſtudy of the beſt of our old Engliſh writers,

writers, ſuch as Sir Thomas More, Aſcham, Hooker, Spenſer, archbiſhop Sandys, Jewel, Chillingworth, Hales, of Eton, and others, formed a new one, conſiſting in original phraſes and new combinations of the integral parts of ſentences, which, with the infuſion of words derived from the Latin and accommodated to our idiom, were ſuch an improvement of the language as greatly tended to enrich it: Cave therefore thought him a fit perſon to conduct this part of his monthly publication, and, diſmiſſing Guthrie, committed the care of it to Johnſon.

Before this change of hands, Cave had been checked by ſome intimations from the clerks of the houſe of commons, that his printing the debates had given offence to the ſpeaker, and might ſubject him to cenſure: this he, for ſome time, regarded but little, relying poſſibly upon the indulgence that had been ſhewn as well to the publiſhers of the Political State of Great Britain, who were the firſt that ventured on this practice, as to himſelf; but a reſolution of the houſe at length gave him to underſtand, that it would be prudence in him to deſiſt from it. The thought of putting his readers on ſhort allowance was very unpleaſing to him, and this, with the apprehenſion that the ſale of his Magazine might be affected by the omiſſion of a kind of intelligence which they had been accuſtomed to, drove him to many contrivances to evade the prohibition, out of which he choſe one that ſcarce any man but himſelf would have thought of: it was the giving to the public the debates in the Britiſh ſenate under a fictitious deſignation. Every one, he knew, was acquainted with Gulliver's Travels; he therefore, in his magazine

for June 1738, begins the month by feigning, that the debates in the ſenate of Magna Lilliputia were then extant; and referring to the reſolution of the houſe of commons, above-mentioned, whereby he was forbidden to inſert any account of the proceedings of the Britiſh parliament, he pretends to doubt not but his readers will be pleaſed with the inſertion of what he calls the appendix to captain Gulliver's account of Lilliput, in their room. A change of fictitious for real names of perſons, countries, and provinces, was abſolutely neceſſary for the carrying on this deſign, and accordingly, by tranſpoſing the letters and otherwiſe anagrammatizing proper names, he has, through the medium of nonſenſe, given light to that which he would be thought to conceal.

Farther to aid his reader as to the names of countries, &c. he publiſhed, at the end of his magazine for 1738, a fictitious propoſal for printing, by ſubſcription, a work, intitled, Anagrammata Rediviva, or the art of compoſing and reſolving anagrams, with a reference to the bookſellers, agents, and maſters of ſhips, in the cities, countries, and provinces therein deſcribed by barbarous names oppoſed to thoſe which they are meant to ſignify: he alſo, at the end of the magazines for 1739, 1740, 1741, 1742, and 1743, gave a liſt of chriſtian and ſurnames pretendedly ſynonimous, forming thereby a key to that otherwiſe unintelligible jargon which Cave, by this ſubterfuge, had introduced into the debates.

The proprietors of the London Magazine, who alſo gave the debates, but from documents leſs authentic than thoſe of Cave, compelled by the ſame neceſſity that

that forced him to this artifice, took another courſe: they feigned to give the debates in the Roman ſenate, and by adapting Roman names to the ſeveral ſpeeches, rendered them more plauſible than they appear under Cave's management.

The artifice however ſucceeded in both inſtances: the reſolution of the commons was never enforced, and the debates were publiſhed with impunity. I will not diſgrace my page by the inſertion of any of thoſe barbarous appellations which Cave had invented, and which, I dare ſay, were muſic to his ear; but content myſelf with ſaying, that Guthrie acquieſced in Cave's fiction and the nonſenſe which it involved, and as it was found to anſwer its end, Johnſon ſcrupled not to adopt it.

The debates penned by Johnſon were not only more methodical and better connected than thoſe of Guthrie, but in all the ornaments of ſtile ſuperior: they were written at thoſe ſeaſons when he was able to raiſe his imagination to ſuch a pitch of fervour as bordered upon enthuſiaſm, which, that he might the better do, his practice was to ſhut himſelf up in a room aſſigned him at St. John's gate, to which he would not ſuffer any one to approach, except the compoſitor or Cave's boy for matter, which, as faſt as he compoſed it, he tumbled out at the door.

Never were the force of reaſoning or the powers of popular eloquence more evidently diſplayed, or the arts of ſophiſtry more clearly detected than in theſe animated compoſitions. Nor are they more worthy of admiration for theſe their excellencies than for that peculiarity of language which diſcriminates

283961

the debates of each aſſembly from the other, and the various colouring which he has found the art of giving to particular ſpeeches. The characteriſtic of the one aſſembly we know is Dignity; the privilege of the other Freedom of Expreſſion. To ſpeak of the firſt, when a member thereof endowed with wiſdom, gravity, and experience, is made to riſe, the ſtile which Johnſon gives him is nervous, his matter weighty, and his arguments convincing; and when a mere popular orator takes up a debate, his eloquence is by him repreſented in a glare of falſe rhetoric, ſpecious reaſoning, an affectation of wit, and a diſpoſition to trifle with ſubjects the moſt intereſting. With great judgment alſo does Johnſon adopt the unreſtrained oratory of the other houſe, and with equal facility imitate the deep-mouthed rancour of Pulteney, and the yelping pertinacity of Pitt.

As an illuſtration of the former part of this poſition, I ſhall here give two ſpeeches, the one of the lord-chancellor Hardwicke on the motion of lord Carteret for an addreſs to his Majeſty, beſeeching him to remove Sir Robert Walpole from his preſence and councils for ever; and the other of lord Cheſterfield on a bill, intitled 'An act for repealing certain 'duties on ſpirituous liquors, and on licences for 'retailing the ſame, and for laying other duties on 'ſpirituous liquors and on licenſes for retailing the 'ſaid liquors.' That of lord Hardwicke is as follows:

'My Lords,

'My Lords,

'Though I very readily admit that crimes ought 'to be puniſhed, that a treacherous adminiſtration 'of public affairs is in a very high degree criminal, 'that even ignorance, where it is the conſequence of 'neglect, deſerves the ſevereſt animadverſion, and 'that it is the privilege and duty of this houſe to 'watch over the ſtate of the nation, and inform his 'Majeſty of any errors committed by his miniſters; 'yet I am far from being convinced either of the 'juſtice or neceſſity of the motion now under conſi-'deration.

'The moſt flagrant and invidious part of the charge 'againſt the right honourable gentleman appears to 'conſiſt in this, that he has engroſſed an exorbitant 'degree of power, and uſurped an unlimited influence 'over the whole ſyſtem of government, that he diſ-'poſes of all honours and preferments, and that he is 'not only firſt but ſole miniſter.

'But of this boundleſs uſurpation, my lords, what 'proof has been laid before you? what beyond loud 'exaggerations, pompous rhetoric, and ſpecious 'appeals to common fame? common fame which at 'leaſt may ſometimes err, and which though it may 'afford ſufficient ground for ſuſpicion and enquiry, 'was never yet admitted as concluſive evidence, 'where the immediate neceſſities of the public did 'not preclude the common forms of examination, 'where the power of the offender did not make it 'dangerous to attack him by a legal proſecution, or 'where the conduct of the accuſer did not plainly

'diſcover that they were more eager of blood than of 'juſtice, and more ſolicitous to deſtroy than to con-'vict.

'I hope none of theſe circumſtances, my lords, 'can at preſent obſtruct a candid and deliberate en-'quiry; with regard to the public, I am not able to 'diſcover any preſſing exigences that demand a more 'compendious method of proceeding than the eſtab-'liſhed laws of the land and the wiſdom of our 'anceſtors have preſcribed. I know not any calamity 'that will be aggravated, nor any danger that will 'become more formidable by ſuffering this queſtion 'to be legally tried.

'Nor is there, my lords, in the circumſtances of 'the perſon accuſed, any thing that can incite us to a 'haſty proceſs, for if what is alledged by the noble 'lords is not exaggerated beyond the truth, if he is 'univerſally deteſted by the whole nation, and loaded 'with execrations by the public voice, if he is conſi-'dered as the author of all our miſeries and the 'ſource of all our corruptions, if he has ruined our 'trade and depreſſed our power, impoveriſhed the 'people and attempted to enſlave them, there is at 'leaſt no danger of an inſurrection in his favour, or 'any probability that his party will grow ſtronger by 'delays. For, my lords, to find friends in adverſity 'and aſſertors in diſtreſs, is only the prerogative of 'innocence and virtue.

'The gentleman againſt whom this formidable 'charge is drawn up, is, I think, not ſuſpected of any 'intention to have recourſe either to force or flight; 'he has always appeared willing to be tried by the 'laws of his country, and to ſtand an impartial ex-'amination;

'amination; he neither oppoſes nor eludes enquiry, 'neither flies from juſtice nor defies it.

'And yet leſs, my lords, can I ſuſpect, that thoſe 'by whom he is accuſed act from any motive that may 'influence them to deſire a ſentence not ſupported by 'evidence or conformable to truth, or that they can 'wiſh the ruin of any man whoſe crimes are not no-'torious and flagrant, that they perſecute from pri-'vate malice, or endeavour to exalt themſelves by the 'fall of another.

'Let us therefore, my lords, enquire before we 'determine, and ſuffer evidence to precede our ſen-'tence. The charge, if it is juſt, muſt be by its own 'nature eaſily proved, and that no proof is brought 'may perhaps be ſufficient to make us ſuſpect that it 'is not juſt.

'For, my lords, what is the evidence of common 'fame, which has been ſo much exalted and ſo confi-'dently produced? Does not every man ſee, that on 'ſuch occaſions two queſtions may be aſked, of which 'perhaps neither can eaſily be anſwered, and which yet 'muſt both be reſolved before common fame can be 'admitted as a proof of facts?

'It is firſt to be enquired, my lords, whether the 'reports of fame are neceſſarily or even probably true. 'A queſtion very intricate and diffuſive, entangled 'with a thouſand and involving a thouſand diſtinc-'ons:—a queſtion, of which it may be ſaid, that a 'man may very plauſibly maintain either ſide, and of 'which, perhaps, after months or years waſted in diſ-'putation, no other deciſion can be obtained than 'what is obvious at the firſt view, that they are 'often true and often falſe, and therefore can only

'be grounds of enquiry, not reaſons of determina-
'tion.

'But if it appear, my lords, that this oracle cannot
'be deceived, we are then to enquire after another
'difficulty, we are to enquire, What is fame?

'Is fame, my lords, that fame which cannot err, a
'report that flies on a ſudden through a nation, of
'which no man can diſcover the original? a ſudden
'blaſt of rumour that inflames or intimidates a peo-
'ple, and obtains, without authority, a general credit?
'No man verſed in hiſtory can enquire whether ſuch
'reports may not deceive. Is fame rather a ſettled
'opinion prevailing by degrees, and for ſome time eſta-
'bliſhed? How long then, my lords, and in what de-
'gree muſt it have been eſtabliſhed to obtain un-
'doubted credit? and when does it commence infalli-
'ble? If the people are divided in their opinions, as in
'all public queſtions it has hitherto happened, fame
'is, I ſuppoſe, the voice of the majority. For if the
'two parties are equal in their numbers, fame will be
'equal, then how great muſt be the majority before it
'can lay claim to this powerful auxiliary? and how
'ſhall that majority be numbered?

'Theſe queſtions, my lords, may be thought, per-
'haps with juſtice, too ludicrous in this place; but in
'my opinion they contribute to ſhew the precarious
'and uncertain nature of the evidence ſo much con-
'fided in.

'Common fame, my lords, is to every man only
'what he himſelf commonly hears, and it is in the
'power of any man's acquaintance to vitiate the evi-
'dence which they report, and to ſtun him with cla-
'mours, and terrify him with apprehenſions of miſeries
'*never felt*, and dangers inviſible.

'But

'memory, been without ſome man in that ſtation, for 'there is always ſome one to whom ambition and 'avarice have paid their court, and whoſe regards 'have been purchaſed at the expence of truth.

'Nor is it to be wondered at, my lords, that poſts 'of honour and profit have been beſtowed upon 'the friends of the adminiſtration, for who enriches 'or exalts his enemies? Who will encreaſe the in-'fluence that is to be exerted againſt him, or add 'ſtrength to the blow that is levelled at himſelf?

'That the right honourable gentleman is the 'only diſpoſer of honours has never yet appeared; 'it is not pretended, my lords, that he diſtributes 'them without the conſent of his Majeſty, nor even 'that his recommendation is abſolutely neceſſary to 'the ſucceſs of any man's applications. If he has 'gained more of his Majeſty's confidence and eſteem 'than any other of his ſervants, he has done only 'what every man endeavours, and what therefore is 'not to be imputed to him as a crime.

'It is impoſſible, my lords, that Kings like other 'men ſhould not have particular motions of inclina-'tion or diſlike; it is poſſible that they may fix their 'affection upon objects not in the higheſt degree 'worthy of their regard, and overlook others that 'may boaſt of greater excellencies and more ſhining 'merit, but this is not to be ſuppoſed without proof, 'and the regard of the King as of any other man, 'is one argument of deſert more than he can produce 'who has endeavoured after it without effect.

'This imputed uſurpation muſt be proved upon 'him either by his own confeſſion or by the evidence 'of others, and it has not yet been pretended that he

'aſſumes

'assumes the title of Prime Minister, or indeed that 'it is applied to him by any but his enemies, and it 'may easily be conceived how weakly the most un- 'corrupted innocence would be supported if all the 'aspersions of its enemies were to be received as proofs 'against it.

'Nor does it appear, my lords, that any other evi- 'dence can be brought against him on this head, or 'that any man will stand forth and affirm, that either 'he has been injured himself by this gentleman, or 'known any injury done by him to another by the 'exertion of authority with which he was not lawfully 'invested; such evidence, my lords, the laws of our 'country require to be produced before any man can 'be punished, censured or disgraced. No man is 'obliged to prove his innocence, but may call upon 'his prosecutors to support their accusation, and 'why this honourable gentleman, whatever may have 'been his conduct, should be treated in a different 'manner than any other criminal, I am by no means 'able to discover.

'Though there has been no evidence offered of his 'guilt, your lordships have heard an attestation of 'his innocence from the noble Nardac * who spoke 'first against the motion, of whom it cannot be sus- 'pected that he would voluntarily engage to answer 'for measures which he pursued in blind compliance 'with the direction of another. The same testimo- 'ny, my lords, can I produce, and affirm with equal 'truth, that in the administration of my province 'I am independent, and left entirely to the decisions 'of my own judgment.

* Duke.

'In

'In every government, my lords, as in every family, 'ſome, either by accident, or a natural induſtry, or a 'ſuperior capacity, or ſome other cauſe, will be en- 'gaged in more buſineſs and treated with more con- 'fidence than others; but if every man is willing to 'anſwer for the conduct of his own province, there is 'all the ſecurity againſt corruption that can poſſibly 'be obtained; for if every man's regard to his own 'ſafety and reputation will prevent him from betraying 'his truſt or abuſing his power, much more will it 'incite him to prevent any miſconduct in another for 'which he muſt himſelf be accountable. Men are 'uſually ſufficiently tenacious of power, and ready to 'vindicate their ſeparate rights, when nothing but their 'pride is affected by the uſurpation, but ſurely no 'man will patiently ſuffer his province to be invaded, 'when he may himſelf be ruined by the conduct of 'the invader.

'Thus, my lords, it appears to me to be not only 'without proof, but without probability, and the firſt 'miniſter can, in my opinion, be nothing more than a 'formidable illuſion, which, when one man thinks he 'has ſeen it, he ſhews to another as eaſily frighted as 'himſelf, who joins with him in propagating the no- 'tion; and in ſpreading terror and reſentment over the 'nation, till at laſt the panic becomes general, and 'what was at firſt only whiſpered by malice or preju- 'dice in the ears of ignorance or credulity, is adopted 'by common fame, and echoed back from the people 'to the ſenate.

'I have hitherto, my lords, confined myſelf to the 'conſideration of one ſingle article of this complicated 'charge, becauſe it appears to me to be the only part

'of

'of it neceſſary to be examined, for if once it be ac-
'knowledged that the affairs of the nation are tranſact-
'ed, not by the miniſter but the adminiſtration, by the
'council, in which every man who ſits there has an
'equal voice and equal authority, the blame or praiſe
'of all the meaſures muſt be transferred from him to
'the council, and every man that has adviſed or con-
'curred in them, will deſerve the ſame cenſure or the
'ſame applauſe; as it is unjuſt to puniſh one man for
'the crimes of another, it is unjuſt to chuſe one man
'out for puniſhment from among many others equally
'guilty.

'But I doubt not, my lords, when all thoſe meaſures
'are equitably conſidered, there will be no puniſh-
'niſhment to be dreaded, becauſe neither negligence
'nor treachery will be diſcovered. For, my lords,
'with regard to the treaty of Vinena *, let us ſuppoſe
'our miniſters deceived by ignorant or corrupt in-
'telligence; let us admit that they were cautious
'where there was no danger, and neglected ſome op-
'portunities which, if they had received better infor-
'mation, they might have improved to the advantage
'and ſecurity of the nation: what have they done
'even under all theſe diſadvantageous ſuppoſitions,
'but followed the lights which they judged moſt
'clear, and by which they hoped to be conducted to
'honour and to ſafety?

'Policy, my lords, is very different from preſcience,
'the utmoſt that can be attained is probability, and
'that, for the moſt part, in a low degree. It is ob-
'ſerved that no man is wiſe, but as you take into
'conſideration the weakneſs of another; a maxim
'more eminently true of political wiſdom, which

* Vienna.

'conſiſts

'conſiſts very often only in diſcovering deſigns which 'could never be known but by the folly or treachery 'of thoſe to whom they are truſted. If our enemies 'were wiſe enough to keep their own ſecrets, neither 'our miniſters nor our patriots would be able to know 'or prevent their deſigns, nor would it be any reproach 'to their ſagacity that they did not know what nobody 'would tell them.

'If therefore, my lords, the princes whoſe intereſt 'is contrary to our own, have been at any time ſerved 'by honeſt and wiſe men, there was a time when our 'miniſters could act only by conjecture, and might 'be miſtaken without a crime.

'If it was always in our power to penetrate into 'the intentions of our enemies, they muſt neceſſarily 'have the ſame means of making themſelves acquaint-'ed with our projects, and yet, when any of them are 'diſcovered, we think it juſt to impute it to the negli-'gence of the miniſter.

'Thus, my lords, every man is inclined to judge 'with prejudice and partiality. When we ſuffer by 'the prudence of our enemies, we charge our miniſters 'with want of vigilance, without conſidering that very 'often nothing is neceſſary to elude the moſt pene-'trating ſagacity but obſtinate ſilence.

'If we enquire into the tranſactions of paſt times, 'ſhall we find any man, however renowned for his abi-'lities, not ſometimes impoſed upon by falſhoods, and 'ſometimes betrayed by his own reaſonings into mea-'ſures deſtructive of the purpoſes which he endeavoured 'to promote? There is no man of whoſe penetration 'higher ideas have been juſtly formed, or who gave more 'frequent proofs of an uncommon penetration into fu-

'turity

'turity than Clewmro *, and yet ſucceeding times have 'ſufficiently diſcovered the weakneſs of aggrandizing 'Bleſuſcu † by depreſſing Iberia ‡, and we wonder now 'how ſo much policy could fall into ſo groſs an error, 'as not rather to ſuffer power to remain in the diſtant 'enemy, than transfer it to another equally divided 'from us by intereſt, and far more formidable by the 'ſituation of his dominions.

'Clewmro, my lords, ſuffered himſelf to be hur-'ried away by the near proſpect of preſent advantages, 'and the apprehenſion of preſent dangers, and every 'other man has been in the ſame manner ſometimes 'deluded into a preference of ſmaller preſent advan-'tage to a greater which was more remote.

'Let it not be urged, my lords, that politics are 'advanced ſince the time of Clewmro, and that errors 'which might then be committed by the wiſeſt ad-'miniſtration, are now groſs and reproachful: we are 'to remember that every part of policy has been 'equally improved, and that, if more methods of 'diſcovery have been ſtruck out, there have been 'likewiſe more arts invented of eluding it.

'When therefore we enquire into the conduct, or ex-'amine the abilities of a miniſter, we are not to expect 'that he ſhould appear never to have been deceived, 'but that he ſhould never be found to have neglected 'any proper means of information, nor ever to have 'willingly given up the intereſt of his country; but 'we are not to impute to his weakneſs what is only 'to be aſcribed to the wiſdom of thoſe whom he 'oppoſed.

'If this plea, my lords, is reaſonable, it will be

* Cromwell. † France. ‡ Spain.

'neceſſary

'neceſſary for thoſe who ſupport the motion, to prove, 'not only that the treaty of Vinena was never made, 'but that the falſhood of the report either was or 'might have been known by our miniſters, otherwiſe 'thoſe who are inclined to retain a favourable opinion 'of their integrity and abilities, may conclude, that 'they were either not miſtaken, or were led into error 'by ſuch deluſions as would no leſs eaſily have impoſ-'ed on their accuſers, and that by exalting their ene-'mies to their ſtations they ſhall not much conſult the 'advantage of their country.

'This motion therefore, my lords, founded upon 'no acknowledged, no indiſputable facts, nor ſupport-'ed by legal evidence, this motion, which by appeal-'ing to common fame as the ultimate judge of every 'man's actions, may bring every man's life or fortune 'into danger, this motion, which condemns without 'hearing and decides without examining, I cannot 'but reject, and hope your lordſhips will concur 'with me *.

This nervous ſpeech was occaſioned by one of the earl of Abingdon in ſupport of the motion, which he grounded on the evidence of common fame. The drift of lord Hardwicke's ſpeech is to invalidate that kind of teſtimony, and in this he diſplays the talents of a ſound lawyer and an eloquent orator; but the private virtues of Sir Robert Walpole were ſuch, that few of his enemies wiſhed for a greater puniſhment on him than the diveſting him of power, and accordingly the motion contained no ſpecific charge of crimes that called for public juſtice: it tended to ſhew that the miniſter had been inattentive to the complaints of the

* Gent. Mag. 1741, page 402.

merchants,

merchants, averſe to the proſecution of the war, and unſkilful in the conduct of it, and that the councils of the nation had not proſpered under his influence, and that theſe facts were notorious: theſe were ſurely reaſons for his removal, and ſuperſeded the neceſſity of legal forms, and that kind of evidence which is required to ſupport a bill of attainder or an impeachment. Lord Hardwicke's argument may therefore ſeem fallacious, but it was admirably calculated to elude the charge; he wilfully miſtook the deſign of the motion, and ſet himſelf to invalidate the kind of evidence on which it was grounded, and to ſhew its inſufficiency to ſupport a legal proſecution, and ſucceeding therein, his opponents thought their arguments refuted when in truth they were not.

The ſpeech of Lord Cheſterfield on a different ſubject, and againſt a meaſure of a ſucceeding, and, as it was pretended, a purer adminiſtration, is as follows.

'My Lords,

'The bill now under our conſideration appears to 'me to deſerve a much cloſer regard than ſeems to 'have been paid to it in the other houſe, through 'which it was hurried with the utmoſt precipitation, 'and where it paſſed almoſt without the formality of 'a debate; nor can I think that earneſtneſs with which 'ſome lords ſeem inclined to preſs it forward here, 'conſiſtent with the importance of the conſequences 'which may be, with great reaſon, expected from it.

'It has been urged that where ſo great a number 'have formed expectations of a national benefit from 'any bill, ſo much deference at leaſt is due to their 'judgment, as that the bill ſhould be conſidered in a 'committee. This, my lords, I admit to be, in other 'caſes, a juſt and reaſonable demand, and will readily

'allow that the propoſal, not only of a conſiderable 'number, but even of any ſingle lord, ought to be fully 'examined and regularly debated, according to the 'uſual forms of this aſſembly. But in the preſent caſe, 'my lords, and in all caſes like the preſent, the de-'mand is improper becauſe it is uſeleſs, and it is 'uſeleſs becauſe we can do now all that we can do 'hereafter in a committee. For the bill before us is 'a money-bill, which, according to the preſent opinion 'of the clinabs*, we have no right to amend, and 'which therefore we have no need of conſidering in a 'committee, ſince the event of all our deliberations muſt 'be, that we are either to reject or paſs it in its preſent 'ſtate; for I ſuppoſe no lord will think this a proper 'time to enter into a controverſy with the clinabs 'for the revival of thoſe privileges to which, I be-'lieve, we have a right, and ſuch a controverſy, the 'leaſt attempt to amend a money-bill will certainly 'produce.

'To deſire, therefore, my lords, that this bill may 'be conſidered in a committee, is only to deſire that 'it may gain one ſtep without oppoſition, that it may 'proceed through the forms of the houſe by ſtealth, 'and that the conſideration of it may be delayed till 'the exigencies of the government ſhall be ſo great, 'as not to allow time for raiſing the ſupplies by any 'other method.

'By this artifice, groſs as it is, the patrons of this 'wonderful bill hope to obſtruct a plain and open 'detection of its tendency. They hope, my lords, 'that the bill ſhall operate in the ſame manner with 'the liquor which it is intended to bring into more 'general uſe; and that as thoſe that drink ſpirits are

* Commons.

'drunk

'drunk before they are well aware that they are 'drinking, the effects of this law ſhall be perceived, 'before we know that we have made it. Their intent 'is to give us a dram of policy which is to be ſwal-'lowed before it is taſted, and which, when once it is 'ſwallowed, will turn our heads.

'But, my lords, I hope we ſhall be ſo cautious as 'to examine the draught which theſe ſtate-em-'pirics have thought proper to offer us, and I am 'confident that a very little examination will con-'vince us of the pernicious qualities of their new 'preparation, and ſhew that it can have no other effect 'than that of poiſoning the public.

'The law before us, my lords, ſeems to be the 'effect of that practice of which it is intended like-'wiſe to be the cauſe, and to be dictated by the 'liquor of which it ſo effectually promotes the uſe, 'for ſurely it never before was conceived by any man 'intruſted with the adminiſtration of public affairs, to 'raiſe taxes by the deſtruction of the people.

'Nothing, my lords, but the deſtruction of all the 'moſt laborious and uſeful part of the nation, can be 'expected from the licenſe which is now propoſed to 'be given, not only to drunkenneſs, but to drunken-'neſs of the moſt deteſtable and dangerous kind, to 'the abuſe not only of intoxicating but of poiſonous 'liquors.

'Nothing, my lords, is more abſurd than to aſſert, 'that the uſe of ſpirits will be hindered by the bill now 'before us, or indeed that it will not be in a very 'great degree promoted by it. For what produces 'all kind of wickedneſs but the proſpect of impunity 'on one part, or the ſolicitation of opportunity on

'the other? Either of theſe have too frequently been 'ſufficient to overpower the ſenſe of morality, and 'even of religion, and what is not to be feared from 'them when they ſhall unite their force, and operate 'together, when temptations ſhall be increaſed and 'terror taken away?

'It is allowed by thoſe who have hitherto diſputed 'on either ſide of this queſtion, that the people ap-'pear obſtinately enamoured of this new liquor: it 'is allowed, on both parts, that this liquor corrupts 'the mind and enervates the body, and deſtroys vi-'gour and virtue, at the ſame time that it makes thoſe 'who drink it too idle and too feeble for work, and 'while it impoveriſhes them by the preſent expence, 'diſables them from retrieving its ill conſequences 'by ſubſequent induſtry.

'It might be imagined, my lords, that thoſe who 'had thus far agreed, would not eaſily find any oc-'caſion of diſpute, nor would any man, unacquainted 'with the motives by which ſenatorial debates 'are too often influenced, ſuſpect, that after the per-'nicious qualities of this liquor, and the general 'inclination among the people to the immoderate 'uſe of it had been generally admitted, it could be 'afterwards enquired, whether it ought to be made 'more common, whether this univerſal thirſt for 'poiſon ought to be encouraged by the legiſlature, 'and whether a new ſtatute ought to be made to 'ſecure drunkards in the gratification of their ap-'petites.

'To pretend, my lords, that the deſign of this bill 'is to prevent or diminiſh the uſe of ſpirits, is to

'trample

'trample upon common ſenſe, and to violate the 'rules of decency as well as of reaſon. For when 'did any man hear that a commodity was prohibited 'by licenſing its ſale, or that to offer and refuſe is the 'ſame action.

'It is indeed pleaded that it will be made dearer by 'the tax which is propoſed, and that the increaſe of the 'price will diminiſh the numbers of the purchaſers, but 'it is at the ſame time expected, that this tax ſhall 'ſupply the expence of a war on the Continent. It is 'aſſerted, therefore, that the conſumption of ſpirits 'will be hindered, and yet, that it will be ſuch as may 'be expected to furniſh, from a very ſmall tax, a re-'venue ſufficient for the ſupport of armies, for the 're-eſtabliſhment of the Auriſtan* family, and the re-'preſſion of the attempts of Blefuſcu †.

'Surely, my lords, theſe expectations are not very 'conſiſtent, nor can it be imagined that they are both 'formed in the ſame head, though they may be ex-'preſſed by the ſame mouth. It is, however, ſome 'recommendation of a ſtateſman, when, of his aſſer-'tions, one can be found reaſonable or true, and in 'this, praiſe cannot be denied to our preſent miniſters; 'for though it is undoubtedly falſe that this tax will 'leſſen the conſumption of ſpirits, it is certainly true 'that it will produce a very large revenue, a revenue 'that will not fail but with the people from whoſe 'debaucheries it ariſes.

'Our miniſters will therefore have the ſame honour 'with their predeceſſors, of having given riſe to a 'new fund, not indeed for the payment of our debts,

* Auſtrian. † France.

'but for much more valuable purpoſes, for the 'exaltation of our hearts under oppreſſion, for the ele-'vation of our ſpirits amidſt miſcarriages and diſap-'pointments, and for the chearful ſupport of thoſe 'debts which we have loſt hopes of paying. They 'are reſolved, my lords, that the nation, which 'nothing can make wiſe, ſhall, while they are 'at its head, at leaſt be merry, and ſince public 'happineſs is the end of government, they ſeem 'to imagine that they ſhall deſerve applauſe, by 'an expedient, which will enable every man to 'lay his cares aſleep, to drown ſorrow, and loſe, in 'the delights of drunkenneſs, both the public miſeries 'and his own.

'Surely, my lords, men of this unbounded bene-'volence and this exalted genius, deſerve ſuch honours 'as were never paid before; they deſerve to beſtride 'a butt upon every ſign-poſt in the metropolis, or 'to have their countenances exhibited as tokens where 'this liquor is to be ſold by the licenſe which they 'have procured. They muſt be at leaſt remembered 'to future ages as the happy politicians, who after 'all expedients for raiſing taxes had been employed, 'diſcovered a new method of draining the laſt 'reliques of the public wealth, and added a new reve-'nue to the government; nor will thoſe who ſhall here-'after enumerate the ſeveral funds now eſtabliſhed 'among us, forget, among the benefactors to their 'country, the illuſtrious authors of the drinking 'fund.

'May I be allowed, my lords, to congratulate my 'countrymen and fellow-ſubjects upon the happy 'times which are now approaching, in which no

'man

'man will be diſqualified for the privilege of being 'drunk? when all diſcontent and diſloyalty ſhall be 'forgotten, and the people, though now conſidered 'by the miniſtry as their enemies, ſhall acknowledge 'the lenity of that government under which all 'reſtraints are taken away.

'But to a bill for ſuch deſirable purpoſes, it would 'be proper, my lords, to prefix a preamble in which 'the kindneſs of our intentions ſhould be more fully 'explained, that the nation may not miſtake our 'indulgence for cruelty, nor conſider their bene-'factors as their perſecutors. If therefore this bill 'be conſidered and amended, (for why elſe ſhould it 'be conſidered?) in a committee, I ſhall humbly 'propoſe that it ſhall be introduced in this manner: 'Whereas the deſigns of the preſent miniſtry, what-'ever they are, cannot be executed without a great 'number of mercenaries, which mercenaries cannot 'be hired without money; and whereas the preſent 'diſpoſition of this nation to drunkenneſs, inclines us 'to believe, that they will pay more chearfully for 'the undiſturbed enjoyment of diſtilled liquors, than 'for any other conceſſion that can be made by the 'government; be it enacted by the King's moſt ex-'cellent Majeſty, that no man ſhall hereafter be denied 'the right of being drunk on the following conditi-'ons.

'This, my lords, to trifle no longer, is the proper 'preamble to this bill, which contains only the con-'ditions on which the people of this kingdom are to 'be allowed henceforward to riot in debauchery, in de-'bauchery licenſed by law, and countenanced by the 'magiſtrates, for there is no doubt but thoſe on whom

'the inventors of this tax ſhall confer authority, will 'be directed to aſſiſt their maſters in their deſign, to 'encourage the conſumption of that liquor from 'which ſuch large revenues are expected, and to mul- 'tiply, without end, thoſe licenſes which are to pay 'an yearly tribute to the crown.

'By this unbounded licenſe, my lords, that price 'will be leſſened, from the increaſe of which the ex- 'pectations of the efficacy of this law are pretended, 'for the number of retailers will leſſen the value as 'in all other caſes, and leſſen it more than this tax 'will increaſe it. Beſides, it is to be conſidered, that 'at preſent the retailer expects to be paid for the 'danger which he incurs by an unlawful trade, and 'will not truſt his reputation or his purſe to the mercy 'of his cuſtomer, without a profit proportioned to 'the hazard; but when once the reſtraint ſhall be 'taken away, he will ſell for common gain, and it 'can hardly be imagined, that at preſent he ſubjects 'himſelf to informations and penalties for leſs than 'ſix-pence a gallon.

'The ſpecious pretence on which this bill is founded, 'and indeed the only pretence that deſerves to be 'termed ſpecious, is the propriety of taxing vice; 'but this maxim of government has, on this occaſion, 'been either miſtaken or perverted. Vice, my lords, 'is not, properly, to be taxed but ſuppreſſed, and 'heavy taxes are ſometimes the only means by which 'that ſuppreſſion can be attained. Luxury, my 'lords, or the exceſs of that which is pernicious only 'by its exceſs, may very properly be taxed, that ſuch 'exceſs, though not ſtrictly unlawful, may be made 'more difficult; but the uſe of thoſe things which

'are

'are ſimply hurtful, hurtful in their own nature and 'in every degree, is to be prohibited. None, my 'lords, ever heard in any nation of a tax upon theft or 'adultery, becauſe a tax implies a licenſe granted for 'the uſe of that which is taxed, to all who ſhall be 'willing to pay it.

'Drunkenneſs, my lords, is univerſally, and in all 'circumſtances an evil, and therefore ought not to be 'taxed, but puniſhed, and the means of it not to be 'made eaſy by a ſlight impoſt which none can feel, 'but to be removed out of the reach of the people, 'and ſecured by the heavieſt taxes levied with the 'utmoſt rigour. I hope thoſe to whoſe care the 'religion of the nation is particularly conſigned, will 'unanimouſly join with me in maintaining the ne-'ceſſity not of taxing vice but ſuppreſſing it, and unite 'for the rejection of a bill, by which the future as 'well as the preſent happineſs of thouſands muſt be 'deſtroyed *.'

This ſpeech is a contraſt to that of lord Hardwicke, and to him who uttered it may be applied the character which biſhop Burnet gives of Waller, viz. 'That he was only concerned to ſay that which ſhould 'make him applauded; he never laid the buſineſs of 'the houſe to heart, being a vain and empty, though 'a witty man.'

The ſubject of this important debate was a bill to reſtrain the uſe of ſpirituous liquors, founded on evidence that no leſs a quantity than ſeven millions of gallons thereof were yearly diſtilled and conſumed in this country, and that in many pariſhes within the

* Gent. Mag. 1743, page 625.

bills

bills of mortality, excluſive of London and Southwark, every ſixth houſe retailed them. The bill, under the influence of the duke of Newcaſtle, lord Carteret, Mr. Sandys and others, the then miniſtry, paſſed the commons with little or no oppoſition, and money was immediately raiſed on the tax thereby impoſed. In the houſe of lords it was vehemently oppoſed by the biſhops and many of the lay lords, with great force of reaſoning, and by lord Cheſterfield in the above ſpeech, which has little of argument in it, though it goes to prove, that the practice ought to have been ſuppreſſed rather than tolerated. It however paſſed, and notwithſtanding the ſubſequent laws ſince made to palliate it, the evil to a great degree ſubſiſts at this day.

In the peruſal of theſe debates, as written, we cannot but wonder at the powers that produced them. The author had never paſſed thoſe gradations that lead to the knowledge of men and buſineſs: born to a narrow fortune, of no profeſſion, converſant chiefly with books, and, if we believe ſome, ſo deficient in the formalities of diſcourſe, and the practices of ceremony, as in converſation to be ſcarce tolerable; unacquainted with the ſtile of any other than academical diſputation, and ſo great a ſtranger to ſenatorial manners, that he never was within the walls of either houſe of parliament. That a man, under theſe diſadvantages, ſhould be able to frame a ſyſtem of debate, to compoſe ſpeeches of ſuch excellence, both in matter and form, as ſcarcely to be equalled by thoſe of the moſt able and experienced ſtateſmen, is, I ſay, matter of aſtoniſhment, and a proof of talents that qualified him for a ſpeaker in the moſt auguſt aſſembly on earth.

Cave,

Cave, who had no idea of the powers of eloquence
r the human mind, became ſenſible of its effects
he profits it brought him: he had long thought
t the ſucceſs of his Magazine proceeded from thoſe
ts of it that were conducted by himſelf, which
e the abridgement of weekly papers written againſt
miniſtry, ſuch as the Craftſman, Fog's Journal,
nmon Senſe, the Weekly Miſcellany, the Weſt-
ıſter Journal, and others, and alſo marſhalling the
orals, the elegies, and the ſongs, the epigrams, and
rebuſes that were ſent him by various correſpon-
ts, and was ſcarcely able to ſee the cauſes that at
time increaſed the ſale of his pamphlet from ten
ifteen thouſand copies a month. But if he ſaw not, he
them, and manifeſted his good fortune by buying
old coach and a pair of older horſes; and, that he
ght avoid the ſuſpicion of pride in ſetting up an
ipage, he diſplayed to the world the ſource of his
uence, by a repreſentation of St. John's gate, inſtead
his arms, on the door-pannel. This he told me
nſelf was the reaſon of diſtinguiſhing his carriage
m others, by what ſome might think a whimſical
rice, and alſo for cauſing it to be engraven on all
plate.

Johnſon had his reward, over and above the pecu-
ry recompence vouchſafed him by Cave, in the
ıeral applauſe of his labours, which the increaſed
nand for the Magazine implied; but this, as his
formances fell ſhort of his powers, gratified him but
le; on the contrary, he diſapproved the deceit he was
npelled to practice; his notions of morality were ſo
ict, that he would ſcarcely allow the violation of
ıth in the moſt trivial inſtances, and ſaw, in falſhood

of

of all kinds, a turpitude that he could never be thoroughly reconciled to: and though the fraud was perhaps not greater than the fictitious relations in Sir Thomas More's Utopia, lord Bacon's Nova Atlantis, and biſhop Hall's Mundus alter et idem, Johnſon was not eaſy till he had diſcloſed the deception.

In the mean time it was curious to obſerve how the deceit operated. It has above been remarked, that Johnſon had the art to give different colours to the ſeveral ſpeeches, ſo that ſome appear to be declamatory and energetic, reſembling the orations of Demoſthenes; others like thoſe of Cicero, calm, perſuaſive; others, more particularly thoſe attributed to ſuch country-gentlemen, merchants, and ſeamen as had ſeats in parliament, bear the characteriſtic of plainneſs, bluntneſs, and an affected honeſty as oppoſed to the plauſibility of ſuch as were underſtood or ſuſpected to be courtiers: the artifice had its effect; Voltaire was betrayed by it into a declaration, that the eloquence of ancient Greece and Rome was revived in the Britiſh ſenate, and a ſpeech of the late earl of Chatham when Mr. Pitt, in oppoſition to one of Mr. Horatio Walpole, received the higheſt applauſe, and was by all that red it taken for genuine;* and we are further told

* The ſpeech here alluded to, taking it to have been ſpoken as it is printed, was uttered in a debate on a bill for the encouragement and increaſe of ſeamen, containing a clauſe for a regiſter of ſeamen, and was intended to take away the neceſſity of impreſſing for the ſea-ſervice, which bill, as being a miniſterial meaſure, was vehemently oppoſed. It is a reply, void of argument and loaded with abuſe, to a ſober reproof of a grave and experienced ſenator. To judge of its merits, and as a ſpecimen of the ſpeaker's method of debating at that early period of his life, it is neceſſary to compare it with that to

told of a perſon in a high office under the government, who being at breakfaſt at a gentleman's chambers in Gray's inn,

to which it pretends to be an anſwer, and for that purpoſe both are here inſerted, and firſt that of Mr. Walpole.

'SIR,

'I was unwilling to interrupt the courſe of this debate while 'it was carried on with calmneſs and decency by men who do not 'ſuffer the ardour of oppoſition to cloud their reaſon, or tranſport 'them to ſuch expreſſions as the dignity of this aſſembly does not 'admit. I have hitherto deferred to anſwer the gentleman who 'declaimed againſt the bill with ſuch fluency of rhetoric, and ſuch 'vehemence of geſture, who charged the advocates for the ex-'pedients now propoſed, with having no regard to any intereſt but 'their own, and with making laws only to conſume paper, and 'threatened them with the defection of their adherents, and the 'loſs of their influence, upon this new diſcovery of their folly and 'their ignorance.

'Nor, Sir, do I now anſwer him for any other purpoſe than to 'remind him how little the clamours of rage, and petulancy of 'invectives contribute to the purpoſes for which this aſſembly is 'called together; how little the diſcovery of truth is promoted, 'and the ſecurity of the nation eſtabliſhed by pompous diction and 'theatrical emotions.

'Formidable ſounds and furious declamations, confident aſſer-'tions, and lofty periods, may affect the young and unexperienced, 'and perhaps the gentleman may have contracted his habits of 'oratory by converſing more with thoſe of his own age than 'with ſuch as have had more opportunities of acquiring know-'ledge, and more ſucceſsful methods of communicating their 'ſentiments.

'If the heat of his temper, Sir, would ſuffer him to attend 'to thoſe whoſe age and long acquaintance with buſineſs give 'them an indiſputable right to deference and ſuperiority, he 'would learn, in time, to reaſon rather than declaim, and 'to preſer juſtneſs of argument, and an accurate knowledge of

'facts,

Gray's inn, Johnſon being alſo there, declared, that by the ſtyle alone of the ſpeeches in the debates, he could

'facts, to ſounding epithets and ſplendid ſuperlatives, which 'may diſturb the imagination for a moment, but leave no laſting 'impreſſion on the mind.

'He will learn, Sir, that to accuſe and prove are very different, 'and that reproaches, unſupported by evidence, affect only the 'character of him that utters them. Excurſions of fancy and 'flights of oratory are indeed pardonable in young men, but in 'no other, and it would ſurely contribute more, even to the pur-'poſe for which ſome gentlemen appear to ſpeak, that of depre-'ciating the conduct of the adminiſtration, to prove the incon-'veniences and injuſtice of this bill, than barely to aſſert them, 'with whatever magnificence of language or appearance of zeal, 'honeſty or compaſſion.'

To this ſober and temperate ſpeech uttered by a grave ſenator, who had ſerved his country in various capacities, and whoſe moral character was irreproachable, the following was the anſwer of Mr. William Pitt:

'Sir,

'The atrocious crime of being a young man, which the 'honourable gentleman has with ſuch ſpirit and decency charged 'upon me, I ſhall neither attempt to palliate nor deny, but con-'tent myſelf with wiſhing, that I may be one of thoſe whoſe 'follies may ceaſe with their youth, and not of that number who 'are ignorant in ſpite of experience.

'Whether youth can be imputed to any man as a reproach, I 'will not, Sir, aſſume the province of determining; but ſurely 'age may become juſtly contemptible, if the opportunities which 'it brings have paſſed away without improvement, and vice appears 'to prevail when the paſſions have ſubſided. The wretch that, 'after having ſeen the conſequences of a thouſand errors, con-'tinues ſtill to blunder, and whoſe age has only added obſtinacy 'to ſtupidity, is [illegible] the object of either abhorrence or con-'tempt, and deſerves not that his grey head ſhould ſecure him 'from inſults.

'Much

could ſeverally aſſign them to the perſons by whom they were delivered. Johnſon upon hearing this, could not

'Much more, Sir, is he to be abhorred, who, as he has advanced in age, has receded from virtue, and becomes more wicked with leſs temptation, who proſtitutes himſelf for money which he cannot enjoy, and ſpends the remains of his life in the ruin of his country.

'But youth, Sir, is not my only crime; I have been accuſed of acting a theatrical part. A theatrical part may either imply ſome peculiarities of geſture, or a diſſimulation of my real ſentiments, and an adoption of the opinions and language of another man.

'In the firſt ſenſe, Sir, the charge is too trifling to be confuted, and deſerves only to be mentioned that it may be deſpiſed. I am at liberty, like every other man, to uſe my own language; and though I may perhaps have ſome ambition to pleaſe this gentleman, I ſhall not lay myſelf under any reſtraint, nor very ſolicitouſly copy his diction or his mien, however matured by age, or modelled by experience.

'If any man ſhall, by charging me with theatrical behaviour, imply, that I utter any ſentiments but my own, I ſhall treat him as a calumniator and a villain, nor ſhall any protection ſhelter him from the treatment which he deſerves. I ſhall, on ſuch an occaſion, without ſcruple, trample upon all thoſe forms with which wealth and dignity intrench themſelves, nor ſhall anything but age reſtrain my reſentment. Age, which always brings one privilege, that of being inſolent and ſupercilious without puniſhment.

'But with regard, Sir, to thoſe whom I have offended, I am of opinion, that if I had acted a borrowed part, I ſhould have avoided their cenſure; the heat that offended them is the ardour of conviction, and that zeal for the ſervice of my country, which neither hope nor fear ſhall influence me to ſuppreſs. I will not ſit unconcerned while my liberty is invaded, nor look in ſilence upon public robbery. I will exert my endeavours, at whatever hazard, to repel the aggreſſor and drag the thief to juſtice, whoever may protect them in their villany, and whoever

not refrain from undeceiving him, by confeſſing that himſelf was the author of them all.

It muſt be owned, that with reſpect to the general principles avowed in the ſpeeches, and the ſentiments therein contained, they agree with the characters of the perſons to whom they are aſcribed. Thus, to inſtance in thoſe of the upper houſe, the ſpeeches of the duke of Newcaſtle, the lords Carteret and Ilay, are calm, temperate and perſuaſive; thoſe of the duke of Argyle and lord Talbot, furious and declamatory, and lord Cheſterfield's and lord Hervey's florid but flimſy. In the other houſe the ſpeeches may be thus characteriſed; the miniſter's mild and conciliatory, Mr. Pulte-

'ever may partake of their plunder. And if the honourable gen-
'tleman—At theſe words Mr. Winnington roſe up, and calling Mr. Pitt to order, made a ſhort ſpeech, to which Mr. Pitt made this anſwer:

'If this be to preſerve order, there is no danger of indecency 'from the moſt licentious tongue, for what calumny can be more 'atrocious, or what reproach more ſevere, than that of ſpeaking 'with regard to any thing but truth. Order may ſometimes be 'broken by paſſion or inadvertency, but will hardly be re-eſtabliſhed 'by monitors like this, who cannot govern his own paſſion, whilſt 'he is reſtraining the impetuoſity of others.

'Happy, Sir, would it be for mankind, if every one knew his own 'province; we ſhould not then ſee the ſame man at once a criminal 'and a judge, nor would this gentleman aſſume the right of 'dictating to others, what he has not learned himſelf.

'That I may return in ſome degree the favour which he in-'tends me, I will adviſe him never hereafter to exert himſelf 'on the ſubject of order, but, whenever he finds himſelf inclined 'to ſpeak on ſuch occaſions, to remember how he has now ſuc-'ceeded, and condemn in ſilence, what his cenſures will never 'reform*.'

* Gent. Mag. 1741, page 568 et ſeqq.

ney's

5.

ney's nervous, methodical and weighty, Mr. Shippen's blunt and dogmatical, Sir John Barnard's clear, eſpecially on commercial ſubjects, Lyttelton's ſtiff and imitative of the Roman oratory, and Pitt's void of argument but rhapſodically and diffuſively eloquent*. In other particulars the debates of Johnſon are liable to the ſame objections, but in a greater degree, as thoſe of Guthrie; the language of them is too good, and the ſtyle ſuch as none of the perſons to whom the ſpeeches are aſſigned were able to diſcourſe in.

The confeſſion of Johnſon above-mentioned, was the firſt that revealed the ſecret that the debates inſerted in the Gentleman's Magazine were fictitious, and compoſed by himſelf. After that, he was free, and indeed induſtrious, in the communication of it, for being informed that Dr. Smollet was writing a hiſtory of England, and had brought it down to the laſt reign, he cautioned him not to rely on the debates as given in the Magazine, for that they were not authentic, but, excepting as to their general import, the work of his own imagination.

As the ſubjects of theſe debates are at this time become very little intereſting, I ſhall not attempt, farther than I have already done, to embelliſh theſe memoirs by a ſelection of any of thoſe nervous arguments, or eloquent paſſages with which they abound, and the rather as it is impoſſible in the relation of a conflict between two contending parties, to determine the merits of their ſeveral pretenſions, or diſtinguiſh between

* Mr. Pitt profeſſed himſelf to be no reaſoner. In the meetings of his party to ſettle the method of conducting a debate, in oppoſition to the miniſter, he declined the enforcing particular charges of mal-adminiſtration, and always choſe what he called the peroration.

ſpecious, and ſound reaſoning. In the attempts to remove the miniſter, experience has however convinced us, that ambition and perſonal reſentment were the motives that actuated his opponents, for neither when they attained to power did they manifeſt greater integrity, nor did they ceaſe to practiſe thoſe methods for the maintaining their influence over the public councils, which were imputed to him as criminal.

It is beſide my purpoſe to enter into a formal defence of the adminiſtration of this ſervant of the public, or to attempt a detection of the arts that were practiſed to render him odious: I will nevertheleſs mention a few facts reſpecting him that have come to my own knowledge, and may ſerve to exculpate him, in ſome degree, from the charge of being an enemy to the conſtitution or the intereſts of this country.

When he firſt came into power, he found it his duty to undertake the arduous taſk of reconciling the people to the dominion of a prince born in a foreign country, and ſecuring the ſucceſſion to his deſcendants, and this he lived to ſee effected. War he hated as much as ſome of his ſucceſſors did peace, and from a war with Spain he foreſaw that no good could follow: the ſettlements abroad of that power are very remote, and in a climate deſtructive to Engliſhmen; ſo that what we were ever able to take from them we never could hold. The extenſion of empire was never his wiſh; but the encouragement of commerce and the improvement of the revenue, in both which ſubjects his ſkill was unrivalled, engroſſed his attention. To effect the one, a greater number of laws in its favour were framed and

paſſed

paſſed under his ſanction, than had ever been enacted in any known period of equal duration with his miniſtry; and to carry the other into practice, he projected a ſcheme for an extenſion of the exciſe, as the only means of putting a ſtop to the frauds of merchants and illicit traders, and making the receipts of that branch of the public income equal to what they were computed at. This ſcheme, it is true, ſubjected him to much obloquy, and he was neceſſitated to abandon it; but in a ſucceeding adminiſtration it was partly carried into execution, at the expreſs ſolicitation of the principal perſons concerned in that article of trade which it was ſuggeſted would have been moſt affected had the ſcheme paſſed into a law: and afterwards the moſt popular miniſter that ever directed the councils of this country, ſcrupled not to declare in full ſenate, that if ever a time ſhould arrive that was likely to render the project feaſible, himſelf would recommend an extenſion of the exciſe-laws as a meaſure big with advantage to commerce, to the revenue, and to the general intereſts of the kingdom.

The queſtion whether he was in principle an enemy to his country or not, will poſſibly be decided by the following fact, which the beſt authority warrants me in relating: When he was ſeized with the diſorder that put a period to his days, and from its violence he had abandoned the hope of living much longer, he called one of his ſons to him, gave him his bleſſing, and with tears in his eyes told him, that from intelligence he had obtained, he would aſſure him that within a twelvemonth's time the crown of England would be fought for upon Engliſh ground: the ſubſequent

rebellion in 1745, and the irruptions of the enemy beyond the borders of the north, verified this prediction.

As I ſhall have but little occaſion to ſay more of the debates in parliament as they appear in the Magazine, I ſhall cloſe the account above given of them with ſaying, that Johnſon continued to write them till the paſſing the bill for reſtraining the ſale of ſpirituous liquors, which was about the end of the year 1743. After that, they were written by Dr. Hawkeſworth, and by him continued to about 1760, within which period the plan of the Magazine was enlarged by a review of new publications. In this, Mr. Owen Ruffhead was firſt employed, but he being, in about two years, invited to ſuperintend a re-publication of the Statutes at large, the office of reviewer dropped into the hands of Dr. Hawkeſworth, who, though he was thought to exerciſe it with ſome aſperity, continued in it till about the year 1772, when he was employed to digeſt the papers of ſundry late navigators, and to become the editor of that collection of voyages, which in the catalogues of bookſellers is diſtinguiſhed by his name.

About this time Johnſon was ſolicited to undertake an employment of a kind very different from any he had ever been accuſtomed to: it was to compile a catalogue of books; a taſk, which at firſt view, ſeems to be not above the capacity of almoſt the loweſt of literary artificers, but on a nearer was found to require the abilities of one of the higheſt. Oſborne the bookſeller, had ventured on the purchaſe of the earl of Oxford's library of printed books, at the price 13000l. and meaning to diſpoſe of them by ſale

at his ſhop in the ordinary way, projected a catalogue thereof diſtributed into common-places, in five octavo volumes, which being ſold for five ſhillings each, would pay itſelf, and circulate throughout the kingdom and alſo abroad.

It is probable that Oſborne had conſulted Maittaire, then one of the maſters of Weſtminſter ſchool, and who had formerly aſſiſted in making out the Catalogus librorum manuſcriptorum Angliæ & Hiberniæ, on the ſubject of his intended catalogue, and that Maittaire might have furniſhed the general heads or claſſes under which the ſeveral books are arranged, a work of ſome labour, and that required no ſmall ſtock of erudition. This at leaſt is certain, that he drew up a Latin dedication of the whole to Lord Carteret, then ſecretary of ſtate, and ſubſcribed it with his name; but the under-workmen were, as I conjecture, firſt Oldys, and afterwards Johnſon, who while he was engaged in ſo ſervile an employment reſembled a lion in harneſs. The former of theſe perſons was a natural ſon of Dr. Oldys, a civilian of ſome eminence, and ſubſiſted by writing for the bookſellers. Having a general knowledge of books, he had been long retained in the ſervice of Edward earl of Oxford, and was therefore by Oſborne thought a fit perſon for his purpoſe; but whether they diſagreed, or that Oldys was hindered by the reſtraint of his perſon in the Fleet, a misfortune that he laboured under ſome time about that period, he deſiſted, after having proceeded to the end of the ſecond volume. The third and fourth I conceive to be the work of Johnſon *; the fifth is nothing more than a catalogue of Oſborne's old ſtock. The

* At what part of the catalogue Oldys's labours ended and John-

The catalogue of the Harleian printed books, for of the manuſcripts there is another in being, drawn up by an able hand, is of that kind which philologiſts call Bibliotheque Raiſonée, in which beſides the title, and the colophon containing the place and year of publication, a deſcription of each article is given, ſerving to ſhew both its intrinſic and extrinſic worth, the hands through which it has paſſed, and various other particulars that tend to recommend it. I will ſelect a few examples of this kind from the third volume, and leave the reader to applaud the judgment of Oſborne in appointing ſo able a man as Johnſon to this laborious taſk, and the induſtry and perſeverance of the latter in the performance of it.

'No. 412. The Antiquities of Stone-Henge on 'Saliſbury plain reſtored by Inigo Jones, architect-'general to the King, publiſhed by J. Webb, '1655.

'This book has its margins (ſides, tops and 'bottoms, in many leaves) almoſt written 'throughout, with ſome of the ſtrangeſt 'notes, perhaps, to be met with, no ways re-'lating to the ſubject-matter, nor to one ano-

ſon's begin I have no expreſs authority for ſaying: It is related of Johnſon, by a perſon who was very likely to know the fact, that he was employed by Osborne to make 'a catalogue of the Harleian 'Library,' and if not to make ſuch remarks on the books as are above inſerted, an ordinary hand would have done as well; but it required the learning of a ſcholar to furniſh ſuch intelligence as the catalogue contains. This is one of the facts on which I ground my aſſertion that Johnſon worked on the catalogue: to diſcriminate between his notes and thoſe of Oldys, is not eaſy; as literary curioſities, and as a ſpecimen of a great work, they nevertheleſs deſerve attention.

'ther, except in one or two places. The book 'is inſcribed by *J. Webb* to *Philip* earl of '*Pembroke* and *Montgomery*, ſome time lord-'chamberlain to King *Charles* I. and chancellor 'of *Oxford*. And it had been his own copy; 'for the ſaid earl has, in the next leaf, writ his 'own name, which is apparently the ſame 'hand with that in which all thoſe marginal 'eruptions of his memory and imagination 'were written. Some following poſſeſſor, or 'reader of this book, diſcovering the ſaid 'writing to be his lordſhip's, has written in 'the margin againſt his name "This *Philip* "earl of *Pembroke* and *Montgomery* was the "writer of theſe wild notes. *A. Wood* would "have leſs belied him in calling him a mad-"man, than in ſaying he was illiterate and "could not write his name." The notes 'are written in *Latin*, *French* and *Engliſh*, in 'proſe and verſe, containing truth, fiction, 'trifles, matters of uſeful intelligence, ſome 'enough to make you merry, others melan-'choly. He ſeems to have been under the 'diſpleaſure of *Cromwell* and his daughters. 'Of the former he ſays "*Ravilliac Cromuell* "is to be pulled a pieces with wild horſes, "upon *London* ſtreets, and then to be hanged, "drawn, &c. not decapited in jeſt." p. 31. 'In the ſame page where he has writ his name, 'he has theſe words: "If he be mad, as "my lady *Harwood* ſais, (whoſe tongue is no "ſlaunder,) it is rather for wanting the 10000 "pounds a year his father promiſed to give

" him, than that he thinks 6000 pounds a
" year too much for him to manage, with
" Wilton and Ramſbury; for he is very
" learnedly proud, and proudly learned." In
' ſeveral places he has mentioned *Inigo Jones*,
' the King's ſurveyor, affirming in one place,
" He had, for 20 years together, ſixteen thou-
" ſand pounds a year, for keeping the King's
" houſes in repair, and yet they lay worſe
" than any houſe in *Turnball* ſtreet." p. 3.
' But in one place he augments his ſalary
' very much, when he ſays, " *Hiunico Jones*,
" alias *Iniquity Jones*, a juſtice of peace, and
" of the *Quorum*, i and *Cuſtos Rotulorum*,
" hath for keeping the King's houſes in re-
" pair, *deux cens mil eſcu per an.* threeſcore
" thouſand pounds ſterling a year, i and well
" paid: He is fourſcore years ould." p. 34.
' &c. &c.'

' No. 1168. Gloſſarium Archaiologicum, Authore
' Henrico Spelmanno, Equite—1664.

' Becauſe it had been intimated as if the
' latter part of this famous work, now firſt
' publiſhed with the former, and makes it
' complete, was not that learned author's own
' to whom it is aſcribed, Dr. *Robert Brady*
' has ſatisfied the world of this particular in
' the following curious anecdote: " The
" firſt part of the *Gloſſary*, to the letter N,
" was publiſhed in the year 1626, the whole
" being then finiſhed and offered by Sir *Henry*
" *Spelman* to Mr. *Bill*, the King's printer, for
" the value of five pounds in books only; but

" he

" he refuſing to give him that ſmall rate for
" the copy, he ventured to print the firſt part
" of it at his own charge, and moſt of the
" books lay upon his hands until the latter
" end of the year 1637, when Mr. *Stephens*
" and Mr. *Meredith* (bookſellers in St. *Paul's*
" church-yard) took them off. The next year,
" viz. Sir *William Dugdale* being with Sir
" *Henry Spelman*, and telling him that many
" learned men were very deſirous to ſee the
" remaining part of that work, Sir *Henry*
" then told him what is here related, and
" produced *both parts* of the *Gloſſary*, the firſt
" whereof was printed, and interleaved with
" blank leaves, as alſo was the ſecond, which
" was in manuſcript, wherein he had added and
" altered much. After his Majeſty's *reſtaura-*
" *tion*, the earl of *Clarendon*, then lord-chan-
" cellor, and Dr. *Sheldon*, then biſhop of
" *London*, inquired of Sir *William Dugdale*
" what was become of the remaining part
" of the *Gloſſary*, or whether ever it was
" finiſhed? He told them it was finiſhed, and
" in the hands of Mr. *Charles Spelman*, grand-
" child to Sir *Henry*, and youngeſt ſon to Sir
" *John*. Whereupon they deſired Sir *William*
" to move him to print it, which he did:
" but finding that the bookſellers would give
" *nothing* for the copy, and that he was not
" able to print it at his own charge, and
" returning this anſwer to the lord chancellor
" and biſhop of *London*, they contributed
" liberally themſelves; and procuring many

" ſubſcriptions

" ſubſcriptions to that purpoſe, deſired Sir " *William Dugdale* to receive the money, and " deal with a printer to perform the work; " which he did, and cauſed it to be printed " as he received it, all under the proper hand- " writing of Sir *Henry Spelman*, without altera- " tion or addition. And had it not been for " the dreadful fire in *London*, wherein both " the copy and the greateſt part of the im- " preſſion were conſumed, it might at this " day have been produced, to have confirm- " ed what is here reported. For the truth " whereof, Sir *William Dugdale*, a perſon of " great learning, worth, and integrity, and now " a living teſtimony, without exception, may " be conſulted if any man doubts what is here " delivered. See *Animadverſions upon a book* " *called Jani Anglorum Facies Nova*, p. 96. " annexed to an *Anſwer to a book written by* " *William Petit, Eſq*; 8vo. 1681."

' No. 1528. Miſſale Mixtum ſecundum Regulam ' Beati Iſidori dictum Mozarabes. Toleti 1500.

' This is the ſcarceſt book in the whole ' *Harleian* collection. At the end of it are the ' following words, which deſerve to be inſert- ' ed here:

" *Ad laudem omnipotentis Dei, nec non Vir-* " *ginis* Mariæ *matris ejus, omnium ſanctorum* " *ſanctarumq; expletum eſt miſſale mixtum* " *ſecundum regulam beati* Iſidori *dictum* Moza- " rabes: *Maxima cum diligentia perlectum* " *et emendatum, per reverendum in utroq; jure* " *doctorem*

" *doctorem dominum* Alfonſum Ortiz *canonicum*
" Toletanum. *Impreſſum in regal. civitate* Toleti
" *juſſu reverendiſſimi in* Chriſto *Patris Domini*
" D. Franciſci Ximenii, *ejuſdem civitatis ar-*
" *chiepiſcopi. Impenſis nobilis* Melchioris Gor-
" riccii Novarienſis, *per* Magiſtrum Petrum
" Hagembach, Alemanum, *anno ſalutis noſtræ*
" 1500. Die 29° *menſis* Januarii."

' This is ſuppoſed to be the ancient miſſal
' amended and purged by St. *Iſidore*, arch-
' biſhop of *Sevil*, and ordered by the council
' of *Toledo* to be uſed in all churches, every
' one of which, before that time, had a miſſal
' peculiar to itſelf. The *Moors* afterwards
' committing great ravages in *Spain*, deſtroy-
' ing the churches, and throwing every thing
' there, both civil and ſacred, into confuſion,
' all St. *Iſidore's* miſſals, excepting thoſe in
' the city of *Toledo*, were loſt. But thoſe were
' preſerved, even after the *Moors* had made
' themſelves maſters of that city; ſince they
' left ſix of the churches there to the *Chriſtians*,
' and granted them the free exerciſe of their
' religion. *Alphonſus* the ſixth, many ages
' afterwards, expelled the *Moors* from *Toledo*,
' and ordered the *Roman* miſſal to be uſed
' in thoſe churches where St. *Iſidore's* miſſal
' had been in vogue, ever ſince the council
' above-mentioned. But the people of *Toledo*
' inſiſting that their miſſal was drawn up by
' the moſt ancient biſhops, reviſed and cor-
' rected by St. *Iſidore*, proved to be the beſt

' by

'by the great number of ſaints who had follow-
'ed it, and been preſerved during the whole
'time of the *Mooriſh* government in *Spain*, he
'could not bring his project to bear without
'great difficulty. In ſhort, the conteſt be-
'tween the *Roman* and *Toletan* miſſals came
'to that height, that, according to the genius
'of the age, it was decided by a ſingle com-
'bat, wherein the champion of the *Toletan*
'miſſal proved victorious. But King *Alphonſo*,
'ſay ſome of the *Spaniſh* writers, not being
'ſatisfied with this, which he conſidered as the
'effect of chance only, ordered a faſt to be
'proclaimed, and a great fire to be then made,
'into which, after the King and people had
'prayed fervently to God for his aſſiſtance in
'this affair, both the miſſals were thrown,
'but the *Toletan* only eſcaped the violence of
'the flames. This, continue the ſame authors,
'made ſuch an impreſſion upon the King, that
'he permitted the citizens of *Toledo* to uſe their
'own miſſal in thoſe churches that had been
'granted the *Chriſtians* by the *Moors*. How-
'ever, the copies of this miſſal grew afterwards
'ſo ſcarce, that cardinal *Ximenes* found it ex-
'tremely difficult to meet with one of them,
'which induced him to order this impreſſion,
'and to build a chapel, in which this ſervice
'was chanted every day, as it had at firſt been
'by the antient *Chriſtians*. But notwithſtand-
'ing this, the copies of the *Toletan* miſſal
'are become now ſo exceeding rare, that it

'is

'is at preſent almoſt in as much danger of 'being buried in oblivion, as it was when 'committed to the preſs by cardinal *Ximenes*.

'No. 3517. All the workes of John Taylor the 'water poet, being ſixty and three in number, collect-'ed into one volume by the author, with ſundry new 'additions; corrected, reviſed, and newly imprinted— '1630.

'Theſe works conſiſt of ſeveral pieces, 'partly ſerious, but moſtly comical, in proſe 'as well as verſe, which the author had pub-'liſhed from time to time in ſingle pamphlets. 'He frankly owns himſelf no ſcholar, but 'being a man of good natural parts, of a ready 'and copious invention, and having travell-'ed much, and ſeen company of all ſorts, he 'has in many things made good uſe, eſpecially 'in the ſatirical vein of his fancy and obſerva-'tions. Several of the nobility, &c. encou-'raged him, and to them he dedicates ſeveral 'of theſe tracts. There are alſo commenda-'tory verſes before many of them, by ſome 'ingenious writers. Among the pieces for 'which he was moſt noted, may be reckoned 'his *Whip of Pride*, the *Travels of Twelve 'Pence*, *Taylor's Gooſe*, *Taylor's Motto*, *his 'Chronicles in Verſe*, *the Cormorant*, *Praiſe of 'Hempſeed*, *Praiſe of Clean Linen*, *the Peace 'with France in praiſe of Archy*, *ſeveral Elegies*, '&c. Among the proſe pieces: *His Pennyleſs 'Pilgrimage from London to Edinburgh*, in 'which he travelled a mile underneath the 'ſea. *The acts of Nich. Wood the Kentiſh*

" Gormund:

'*Gormund. His pieces upon Tho. Coriat the Odcumbian Traveller. Wit and Mirth, or Pleaſant Jeſts*, &c. As to the author, he is ſaid to have been a *Glouceſterſhire* man, and was bred a ſailor; he was at the taking of *Cadiz* under the earl of *Eſſex*, in 1596, and at *Flores*, in the *Iſland-Voyage*, next year: he was beſides in Germany, Bohemia, Scotland, &c. He was many years collector for the lieutenant of the tower, of the wines which were his fee from all ſhips which brought them up the Thames; but was at laſt diſcharged becauſe he would not purchaſe the place at more than it was worth. He calls himſelf the *King's Water-poet* and the *Queen's Water-man*, and did wear the badge of the royal arms. After the beheading of King Charles, he kept a public-houſe in *Phœnix* alley, near *Long-acre*, and ſet up the *Mourning-Crown*, for his ſign; but found it ſafer to take it down again and hang up his own head inſtead of it. It is ſaid he died about the year 1654*.' Of

* Taylor, though illiterate, was a man of underſtanding, but a ſingular humouriſt. In his account of Wood the great eater, [illegible]ve-mentioned, he relates, that he was very near engaging him [illegible]at time as much black pudding as would reach croſs the [illegible], any place to be fixed on by Taylor himſelf, betwixt [illegible] and [illegible]chmond. Being a waterman by trade, he had a [illegible]tal [illegible]red co[illegible]ies, and wrote a bitter but very diverting in[illegible]e ; and upon a ſuggeſtion that the watermen [illegible]t of employment, preferred a petition to King [illegible]. [illegible] referred to certain commiſſioners, of whom Sir [illegible] one, the object whereof was, to obtain a prohibi[illegible]hc [illegible]s but thoſe on the bank ſide, that the greater part

Of this ſtupendous work the Harleian catalogue, it is difficult to give an idea, ſave by ſuch extracts as thoſe above, and others in Latin of a like kind. Prefixed to it is a Latin dedication to lord Carteret by Mr. Michael Maittaire, dated February 1742-3, and after that, a preface, doubtleſs drawn up by Johnſon, beginning 'To ſolicit a ſubſcription for a catalogue 'of books expoſed to ſale,' wherein with great learning and no leſs judgment, he points out the excellence and extent of the collection, urges thoſe arguments which ſhould induce men of learning to become purchaſers, and anticipates whatever objections could be made to this uncommon ſpecies of catalogue, and the method of circulating it.

The ſeveral articles are diſtributed in the order of a common place, that does honour to Johnſon and Maittaire, who are ſuppoſed to have been jointly the framers of it. Here follows a ſpecimen of the ſubdiviſion of the firſt of the heads therein contained, viz. Theology.

Biblia Sacra Polyglotta.
Hebraica.
Græca.
Nov. Teſtamentum.
Biblia Vulgata.
Latina variorum Interpretum.

part of thoſe who were deſirous of ſeeing plays might be compelled to go by water. Taylor himſelf ſolicited this petition, and was prepared to oppoſe before the commiſſioners the reaſons of the players, but the commiſſion was diſſolved before it came to a hearing.

Gallica.

Gallica.
Italica.
Hiſpanica, Germanica, &c.
Anglica.
in linguis Variis Hodiernis.
Pſalteria.
Pſalteria Metrica.
Concordantiæ & Lexica Biblica.
Comment. Biblicorum Scriptores.
Veterum.
Recentiorum.
Patres Græci & Scriptores Eccleſiaſtici.
Latini & Scriptores Eccleſiaſtici.
Concilia.
Conciliorum Compendia.
Hiſt. Eccleſiaſt.
Vitæ Sanctorum & Theologorum.
Pontificum Rom.
Hiſt. Ord. Monaſtic.
Eccleſ. Orientalis.
Linguis Hodiernis conſcripta.
Theologia Judaica.
Scholaſtica.
Aſcetica.
Miſcellanea.
Catechęſes.
Controverſiæ Theologicæ.
Contra Judeos.
Græcorum Scripta contra Latinos.
Contra Eccleſ. Roman.
Scriptores pro Romana Eccleſia.

Libri

Libri de Jeſuitarum Moribus.
Libri de Ritibus, Cæremoniis et Inſtitutis Eccleſiaſt.
De Ritibus Græcorum.
Liturgiæ Græcorum.
De Ritibus Rom. eccl. &c.
Liturgiæ.
Miſſalia Angliæ, ſive ad uſum Eccleſiæ Sariſburienſis.
Miſſalia Romana.
Miſſalia variarum Eccleſiarum.
Liturgiæ orientalium Eccleſiarum.
Breviaria.
Ritualia.
Proceſſionalia.
Antiphonaria.
Litaniæ.
Ceremonalia & Paſtoralia.
Officia Mariæ Virginis.
Horæ Romanæ.
Horæ Sariſburienſis.
Manualia.
Hymnorum libri.
Scriptores de Trinitate.
Theologia Gallica.
Scriptores de Ritibus Judaicis.

The catalogue having paſſed the preſs, turned out to be very voluminous, and being of a ſingular kind, Oſborne hoped to be able to make the public pay for it; to this end it was, that he directed Johnſon to draw up the preface, giving an account of the contents of the library, and containing a variety of arguments to vindicate a ſolicitation for a ſubſcription, that is to

ſay, a demand of five ſhillings for each volume of the catalogue, to defray the expence of printing it; the volume or volumes ſo purchaſed, to be taken in exchange for any book rated at the ſame value. This paper, of which a character has already been given, was, as I conjecture, a precurſor to the catalogue, and was with great induſtry circulated throughout the kingdom. It anſwered its end; the catalogue was printed in five octavo volumes, the collectors and lovers of books bought it, and Oſborne was reimburſed.

While the catalogue was compiling, Johnſon was further employed by Oſborne to ſelect from the many thouſand volumes of which the library conſiſted, all ſuch ſmall tracts and fugitive pieces as were of greateſt value or were moſt ſcarce, with a view to the reprinting and publiſhing them under the title of the Harleian Miſcellany. To recommend a ſubſcription for printing the collection, propoſals were publiſhed containing an account of the undertaking, and an enumeration of its contents, penned by Johnſon with great art; which being very ſhort, may itſelf be deemed a fugitive piece, and is therefore here inſerted.

'It has been for a long time a very juſt complaint 'among the learned, that a multitude of valuable pro-'ductions, publiſhed in ſmall pamphlets, or in ſingle 'ſheets, are in a ſhort time, too often by accidents or 'negligence, deſtroyed and entirely loſt; and that 'thoſe authors, whoſe reverence for the public has 'hindered them from ſwelling their works with repe-'titions, or incumbering them with ſuperfluities, and 'who, therefore, deſerve the praiſe and gratitude of 'poſterity,

'poſterity, are forgotten, for the very reaſon for which 'they might expect to be remembered. It has been 'long lamented, that the duration of the monuments 'of genius and ſtudy, as well as of wealth and power, 'depends in no ſmall meaſure on their bulk; and that 'volumes, conſiderable only for their ſize, are handed 'down from one age to another, when compendious 'treatiſes, of far greater importance, are ſuffered to 'periſh, as the compacteſt bodies ſink into the water, 'while thoſe of which the extenſion bears a greater 'proportion to the weight, float upon the ſurface.

'This obſervation hath been ſo often confirmed by 'experience, that, in the neighbouring nation, the 'common appellation of ſmall performances is derived 'from this unfortunate circumſtance; a *flying ſheet*, or a '*fugitive piece*, are the terms by which they are diſtin-'guiſhed, and diſtinguiſhed with too great propriety, 'as they are ſubject, after having amuſed mankind for 'a while, to take their flight and diſappear for 'ever.

'What are the loſſes which the learned have already 'ſuſtained, by having neglected to fix thoſe fugitives 'in ſome certain reſidence, it is not eaſy to ſay; but 'there is no doubt that many valuable obſervations 'have been repeated, becauſe they were not preſerved; 'and that, therefore, the progreſs of knowledge has 'been retarded, by the neceſſity of doing what had 'been already done, but was done for thoſe who forgot 'their benefactor.

'The obvious method of preventing theſe loſſes, of 'preſerving to every man the reputation he has me-'rited by long aſſiduity, is to unite theſe ſcattered

'pieces into volumes, that thoſe which are too ſmall 'to preſerve themſelves, may be ſecured by their 'combination with others; to conſolidate theſe atoms 'of learning into ſyſtems, to collect theſe diſunited 'rays, that their light and their fire may become per-'ceptible.

'Of encouraging this uſeful deſign, the ſtudious 'and inquiſitive have now an opportunity, which, 'perhaps, was never offered them before, and which, 'if it ſhould now be loſt, there is not any probability 'that they will ever recover. They may now con-'ceive themſelves in poſſeſſion of the lake into which 'all thoſe rivulets of ſcience have for many years been 'flowing: but which, unleſs its waters are turned into 'proper channels, will ſoon burſt its banks, or be diſ-'perſed in imperceptible exhalations.

'In the Harleian library, which I have purchaſed, 'are treaſured a greater number of pamphlets and 'ſmall treatiſes, than were perhaps ever yet ſeen in 'one place; productions of the writers of all parties, 'and of every age, from the reformation; collected 'with an unbounded and unwearied curioſity, without 'excluſion of any ſubject.

'So great is the variety, that it has been no ſmall 'labour to peruſe the titles, in order to reduce them to 'a rude diviſion, and range their heaps under general 'heads; of which the number, though not yet in-'creaſed by the ſubdiviſion which an accurate ſurvey 'will neceſſarily produce, cannot but excite the curio-'ſity of all the ſtudious, as there is ſcarcely any part 'of knowledge which ſome of theſe articles do not 'comprehend.

[Thea

to vend them as ſuch *. His inſolence to his cuſtomers was alſo frequently paſt bearing. If one came for a book in his catalogue, he would endeavour to force on him ſome new publication of his own, and, if he refuſed, would affront him.

I mention the above particulars of this worthleſs fellow as an introduction to a fact reſpecting his behaviour to Johnſon, which I have often heard related, and which himſelf confeſſed to be true. Johnſon, while employed in ſelecting pieces for the Harleian Miſcellany, was neceſſitated, not only to peruſe the title-page of each article, but frequently to examine its contents, in order to form a judgment of its worth and importance, in the doing whereof, it muſt be ſuppoſed, curioſity might ſometimes detain him too long, and whenever it did, Oſborne was offended. Seeing Johnſon one day deeply engaged in peruſing a book, and the work being for the inſtant at a ſtand, he reproached him with inattention and delay, in ſuch coarſe language as few men would uſe, and ſtill fewer could brook: the other in his juſtification aſſerted ſomewhat, which Oſborne anſwered by giving him the lie; Johnſon's anger at ſo foul a charge, was not ſo great as to make him forget that he had weapons at hand: he ſeized a folio that lay near him, and with it felled his adverſary to the ground, with ſome exclamation, which, as it is differently related, I will not venture to repeat.

This tranſaction, which has been ſeldom urged with any other view than to ſhew that Johnſon was of

* See a note on the Dunciad, Book ii. verſe 167, in the later editions.

an

an iraſcible temper, is generally related as an entertaining ſtory: with me it has always been a ſubject of melancholy reflection. In our eſtimation of the enjoyments of this life, we place wiſdom, virtue, and learning in the firſt claſs, and riches and other adventitious gifts of fortune in the laſt. The natural ſubordination of the one to the other we ſee and approve, and when that is diſturbed we are ſorry. How then muſt it affect a ſenſible mind to contemplate that misfortune, which could ſubject a man endued with a capacity for the higheſt offices, a philoſopher, a poet, an orator, and, if fortune had ſo ordered, a chancellor, a prelate, a ſtateſman, to the inſolence of a mean, worthleſs, ignorant fellow, who had nothing to juſtify the ſuperiority he exerciſed over a man ſo endowed, but thoſe advantages which Providence indiſcriminately diſpenſes to the worthy and the worthleſs! to ſee ſuch a man, for the ſupply of food and raiment, ſubmitting to the commands of his inferior, and, as a hireling, looking up to him for the reward of his work, and receiving it accompanied with reproach and contumely, this, I ſay, is a ſubject of melancholy reflection.

Having completed the Harleian catalogue and miſcellany, and thereby diſengaged himſelf from Oſborne, Johnſon was at liberty to purſue ſome ſcheme of profit, leſs irkſome than that in which he had ſo lately been employed. Biography was a kind of writing that he delighted in; it called forth his powers of reflection, and gave him occaſion to contemplate human life and manners. He had made ſome eſſays of his talent in the lives of Barretier and Boerhaave, men unknown to him, and was now prompted to give to the

world that of a friend with whom he had been cloſely intimate, whoſe ſingular character and adverſe fortunes afforded ample ſcope for diſcuſſion, and furniſhed matter for many admirable leſſons of morality.

This friend was Savage, of whom it has above been related, that his friends had undertaken to raiſe an annual ſubſcription for his ſupport at Swanſea in Wales, but that his departure for that place was retarded by ſome difficulties that occurred in the courſe of their endeavours to raiſe it: theſe, however, were overcome, and Savage, in July 1739, took leave of London, and alſo of Johnſon, who, as himſelf tells us, parted from him with tears in his eyes. His ſubſequent hiſtory is, that taking his way through Briſtol, he was for ſome time detained there by an embargo on the ſhipping. After ſome ſtay he was enabled to depart, and he reached Swanſea; but not liking the place, and reſenting the treatment of his contributors, who ſeem to have been ſlack in the performance of their engagements to ſupport him, he returned to Briſtol with an intent to come to London, a purpoſe he was hindered from effecting by an arreſt of his perſon, on the 10th of January 1742-3, for the ſmall ſum of eight pounds, and carried to Newgate in that city, where, not being able to extricate himſelf from his confinement, he, on the 31ſt day of July, in the ſame year, died.

This event, and the affection which he had long entertained for the man, called forth Johnſon to an exerciſe of his pen, which, as it is ſaid, employed it only thirty-ſix hours, in a narrative of events ſo ſingular

as

as could ſcarcely fail to gratify the curioſity of every one who wiſhed to be inſtructed in the ſcience of human life. The ſubject was ſuch an one as is ſeldom exhibited to view; a man dropped into the world as from a cloud, committed to the care of thoſe who had little intereſt in his preſervation, and none in the forming his temper, or the infuſing into him thoſe little precepts of morality, which might germinate in his mind, and be productive of habitual virtue; theſe are advantages which children of the loweſt birth enjoy, in ſome degree, in common with thoſe of a higher; but of theſe he never participated. All the knowledge he attained to, from his infancy upwards, was ſelf-acquired, and, bating that he was born in a city where the refinements of civil life preſented to his view a rule of moral conduct, he may be ſaid to have been little leſs a miracle than Hai Ebn Yokdhan is feigned to be.

It has been obſerved of thoſe children who owe their nurture and education to a certain benevolent inſtitution in this metropolis, that being by their misfortune ſtrangers to thoſe charities that ariſe from the relations of father, ſon, and brother, their characters aſſume a complexion that marks their conduct through life. The ſame may be ſaid of Savage, and will perhaps account for that want of gratitude to his benefactors, and other defects in his temper, with which he ſeems to have been juſtly chargeable.

The manner in which Johnſon has written this life is very judicious: it afforded no great actions to celebrate, no improvements in ſcience to record, nor any variety of events to remark on. It was a ſucceſſion of

of diſappointments, and a complication of miſeries; and as it was an uniform contradiction to the axiom that human life is chequered with good and evil accidents, was alone ſingular. The virtues and vices which like flowers and weeds ſprang up together, and perhaps with an equal degree of vigour, in the mind of this unfortunate man, afforded, it is true, a ſubject of ſpeculation, and Johnſon has not failed to avail himſelf of ſo extraordinary a moral phenomenon as that of a mind exalted to a high degree of improvement without the aid of culture.

But if the events of Savage's life are few, the reflections thereon are many, ſo that the work may as well be deemed a ſeries of œconomical precepts as a narrative of facts. In it is contained a character, which may be ſaid to be *ſui generis*; a woman who had proclaimed her crimes, and ſolicited reproach, diſowning from the inſtant of his birth, and procuring to be illegitimated by parliament, her own ſon, dooming him to poverty and obſcurity, and launching him upon the ocean of life, only that he might be ſwallowed by its quick-ſands, or daſhed upon its rocks, and laſtly, endeavouring to rid herſelf from the danger of being at any time made known to him, by ſecretly ſending him to the American plantations.

It farther exhibits to view, a man of genius deſtitute of relations and friends, and with no one to direct his purſuits, becoming an author by neceſſity, and a writer for the ſtage, and forming ſuch connections as that profeſſion leads to, ſometimes improving, and at others ſlighting them, but at all times acting with a ſpirit that better became his birth than his circumſtances;

ſtances; for who that knew how to diſtinguiſh between one and the other, would, like Savage, have ſolicited aſſiſtance, and ſpurned at the offer of it? or repaid reiterated kindneſſes with neglect or oblivious taciturnity?

Interſperſed in the courſe of the narrative are a great variety of moral ſentiments, prudential maxims, and miſcellaneous obſervations on men and things; but the ſentiment that ſeems to pervade the whole is, that idleneſs, whether voluntary or neceſſitated, is productive of the greateſt evils that human nature is expoſed to; and this the author exemplifies in an enumeration of the calamities that a man is ſubjected to by the want of a profeſſion, and by ſhewing how far leſs happy ſuch an one muſt be than he who has only a mere manual occupation to depend on for his ſupport.

The concluding paragraph of the book explains the author's intention in writing it, and points out the uſe that may be made of it in ſuch pointed terms, that I ſhall need, as I truſt, no excuſe for inſerting ſo fine a ſpecimen of ſtile and ſentiment.

'This relation will not be wholly without its uſe, 'if thoſe who languiſh under any part of his ſuffer-'ings ſhall be enabled to fortify their patience by re-'flecting, that they feel only thoſe afflictions from 'which the abilities of Savage did not exempt him; 'or if thoſe who in confidence of ſuperior capacities or 'attainments, diſregard the common maxims of life, 'ſhall be reminded, that nothing will ſupply the 'want of prudence, and that negligence and irregu-'larity long continued, will make knowledge uſeleſs, 'wit ridiculous, and genius contemptible.'

This

This celebrated eſſay in biography was publiſhed in the month of February 1744, and gave occaſion to Henry Fielding, the author of a periodical paper intitled 'The Champion,' to commend it in theſe words: 'This pamphlet is, without flattery to its author, as 'juſt and well written a piece as, of its kind, I ever 'ſaw; ſo that, at the ſame time that it highly deſerves, 'it ſtands certainly very little in need of this recom-'mendation.——As to the hiſtory of the unfortunate 'perſon whoſe memoirs compoſe this work, it is cer-'tainly penned with equal accuracy and ſpirit, of 'which I am ſo much the better judge, as I knew 'many of the facts mentioned in it to be ſtrictly true, 'and very fairly related. Beſides, it is not only the ſtory 'of Mr. Savage, but innumerable incidents relating 'to other perſons and other affairs, which render 'this a very amuſing, and withal, a very inſtructive 'and valuable performance. The author's obſerva-'tions are ſhort, ſignificant and juſt, as his narrative 'is remarkably ſmooth and well diſpoſed: his re-'flections open to us all the receſſes of the human 'heart, and, in a word, a more juſt or pleaſant, a 'more engaging or a more improving treatiſe on the 'excellencies and defects of human nature, is ſcarce 'to be found in our own or perhaps in any other 'language.'

The life I am now writing ſeems to divide itſelf into two periods; the firſt marked by a ſeries of afflictions, the laſt by ſome cheering rays of comfort and comparative affluence. Johnſon, at this time, had paſſed nearly the half of his days: here, therefore, let me make a ſtand, and having hitherto repreſented him

him in his literary, endeavour to exhibit him in his religious, moral, and œconomical character, adverting firſt to ſuch particulars reſpecting the courſe of life he had choſen, and the evils to which it expoſed him, as ſeem properly to belong to the firſt member of the above diviſion.

As the narrowneſs of his father's circumſtances had ſhut him out of thoſe profeſſions for which an univerſity education is a neceſſary qualification, and his project of an academy had failed, he had, as to his courſe of life, no choice but idleneſs or the exerciſe of his talents in a way that might afford him ſubſiſtence, and provide for the day that was paſſing over him, ſo that the profeſſion of an author was the only one in his power to adopt. That it was far from an eligible one, he had in ſome degree experienced, and his averſion to labour magnified the evils of it, by bringing to his recollection the examples of Amhurſt, of Savage, of Boyſe*, and many others, from

* The lives of theſe three perſons as they exhibit an example of the diſtreſſes to which idleneſs and the want of moral principles may expoſe men of parts, may be an uſeful caveat to young men of the riſing generation, and prove a more powerful perſuaſive to induſtry, œconomy, and the right uſe of great talents, than the moſt laboured argument. That of Savage preſents itſelf to view in the works of Johnſon: thoſe of the other two are elſewhere to be found, and an abridgement of each of them is inſerted, for the ſame reaſon that beacons are erected to point out rocks and ſhoals to ignorant or benighted perſons.

Nicholas Amhurſt was born at Marden in Kent; but in what year is uncertain: he received his education in Merchant-Taylors' ſchool in London, and was thence removed to St. John's college, Oxford; but expelled for the libertiniſm of his principles and the irregularity of his conduct. After this expulſion, for which very different cauſes were aſſigned by him and thoſe who enforced it,

from which he inferred, that ſlavery and indigence were its inſeparable concomitants, and reflecting on the

it, he ſatirized the learning and diſcipline of the univerſity, and expoſed the characters of its moſt reſpectable members, in a poem called 'Oculus Britanniæ,' and in his 'Terræ Filius,' a work compounded of wit and ſcurrility. He, ſoon after, quitted Oxford, came to London, and publiſhed a volume of miſcellanies: he wrote many ſatirical and malignant poems, and tranſlated ſome of Mr. Addiſon's Latin pieces; but his chief fame aroſe from his conducting the 'Craftſman,' in which he was made the tool of oppoſition. For ſome extraordinarily indiſcreet uſe of his libelling powers, the printers of this paper were ſeized, and Mr. Amhurſt, with a view of being conſidered as the victim of his party, and more than indemnified for all he ſhould ſuffer, ſurrendered himſelf; but the proſecution dropped, and he was diſappointed. Upon the famous compromiſe of 1742, no terms were ſtipulated by his friends for him who had been the inſtrument of their ſucceſs; the reflection whereon is thought to have precipitated his end; for he died in a few months after, as is ſaid, of a broken heart, and was indebted to the bounty of Franklin the printer for a grave.

Samuel Boyſe, the ſon of an Engliſh diſſenting miniſter, was born in 1708, and educated at a private ſchool in Dublin. At eighteen he was ſent to Glaſgow, and before he had completed his nineteenth year, married the daughter of a tradeſman there. His father, for a conſiderable time, ſupported his natural extravagance, which his wife, who was diſſolute and vicious, rendered ſtill more burthenſome. This reſource failing, he went to Edinburgh, where his poetical abilites procured him many friends, particularly the counteſs of Eglinton and lord Stormont, who aſſiſted him in his exigencies, and were diſpoſed to continue their bounty; but Boyſe's charac- and deportment repelled kindneſs. His talents were great: had a genius for poetry, for painting, and muſic; yet it was ſo d by a mean and ſordid temper, that many knew him inti- ut diſcovering his abilities: his choſen acquaintances as could not ſerve him: he was intoxicated whenever s to avoid ſtarving, and was voluptuous, luxurious, expenſive, without the leaſt taſte for what is ele- apt he drew on himſelf at Edinburgh made him reſolve

the lives and conduct of theſe men, might fear that it had a neceſſary tendency to corrupt the mind, and render

reſolve on quitting it for London, whither thoſe who had been his patrons gave him very valuable recommendatory letters; but he ſlighted them, and preferred ſubſiſting by precarious donations. In the year 1740 he was reduced to the want of neceſſary apparel, and having pawned whatever he could exiſt without, was confined by his indigence to a bed which had no ſheets: here, to procure food, he wrote; his poſture ſitting up in bed, his only covering a blanket, in which a hole was made to admit of the employment of his arm.

In 1742, while in a ſpunging-houſe, he was driven to ſolicit Cave for ſome temporary relief, and to procure it, wrote the following horrible deſcription of the ſituation into which his neglect of œconomy and his want of common prudence had plunged him.

'Inſcription for St. LAZARUS's cave.

'Hodie, teſte cœlo ſummo,
'Sine pane, ſine nummo;
'Sorte poſitus infeſte,
'Scribo tibi dolens mœſte.
'Fame, bile, tumet jecur:
'Urbane, mitte opem, precor
'Tibi enim cor humanum
'Non a malis alienum:
'Mihi mens nec male grato,
'Pro a te favore dato.

ALCÆUS.

'Ex gehenna debitoria,
'Vulgo, domo ſpongiatoria.'

'SIR,

'I wrote you yeſterday an account of my unhappy caſe. I am 'every moment threatened to be turned out here, becauſe I have 'not money to pay for my bed two nights paſt, which is uſually 'paid beforehand; and I am loth to go into the counter, till I

'ſee

render the followers of it, with reſpect to religion, to politics, and even to morality, altogether indifferent. Nor could he be ignorant of that mortifying dependence which the profeſſion itſelf expoſes men to, a profeſſion that leads to no preferment, and for its

'ſee if my affair can poſſibly be made up. I hope, therefore, you 'will have the humanity to ſend me half a guinea for ſupport, till 'I can finiſh your papers in my hands. The ode on the Britiſh 'nation I hope to have done to day, and want a proof copy of that 'part of Stowe you deſign for the preſent magazine, that it may be 'improved as far as poſſible from your aſſiſtance. Your papers are 'but ill tranſcribed. I agree with you as to St. Auguſtine's cave. 'I humbly intreat your anſwer, having not taſted any thing ſince 'Tueſday evening I came here; and my coat will be taken off my 'back for the charge of the bed, ſo that I muſt go into priſon naked, 'which is too ſhocking for me to think of.

'I am, with ſincere regard,

'Sir,

'Your unfortunate humble ſervant,

'S. BOYSE.'

'Crown coffee-houſe, Grocer's alley,

'Poultry, July 21, 1742.

'Received from Mr. Cave the ſum of half a guinea by me, in 'confinement, S. Boyſe.'

The miſeries of his confinement did not teach him diſcretion: he was releaſed, but his wants were little abated, and he made uſe of the moſt diſgraceful arts to excite charity: he ſometimes raiſed ſubſcriptions for non-exiſtent poems, and ſometimes employed his wife to give out that he was dying. He was afterwards engaged, at a very low rate, in the compilation of an hiſtorical view of the tranſactions of Europe, by Mr. Henry of Reading; at which place his wife died. To ſignify his ſorrow for her death, he tied a black ribbon round the neck of a lap-dog, which, to acquire the character of a man of taſte, he uſed to carry in his arms. After he left Reading, he grew more decent in his dreſs and behaviour; but his health was then declining, and in May 1749 he died in an obſcure lodging near Shoe-lane, and was buried at the charge of the pariſh.

moſt

moſt laborious exertions confers no greater a reward than a ſupply of natural wants.

Ralph, a writer of this claſs, and who had formed ſome ſuch connections as would have flattered the hopes of any man, was the tool of that party of which the late lord Melcombe laboured to be the head. To ſerve the intereſts of it, he wrote a periodical paper, and a voluminous hiſtory of England, fraught with ſuch principles as he was required to diſſeminate. This man, in a pamphlet intitled 'The caſe of authors by profeſſion,' has enumerated all the evils that attend it, and ſhewn it to be the laſt that a liberal mind would chooſe.

All this Johnſon knew and had duly weighed: the leſſer evils of an author's profeſſion, ſuch as a dependence on bookſellers, and a precarious income, he was able to endure, and the greater, that is to ſay, the proſtitution of his talents, he averted; for, whatever ſacrifices of their principles ſuch men as Waller, Dryden, and others, have made in their writings, or to whatever lengths they may have gone in panegyrics or adulatory addreſſes, his integrity was not to be warped: his religious and political opinions he retained and cheriſhed; and in a ſullen confidence in the ſtrength of his mental powers, diſdained to ſolicit patronage by any of the arts in common uſe with writers of almoſt every denomination. That his firmneſs was not affected, will appear by a retroſpect to the methods he took for the attainment of knowledge, and the ſettling his notions as to the great duties of life.

His courſe of ſtudy at the univerſity was irregular and deſultory, and ſcarcely determined as to its object.

Mathematics and phyſics he had but little reliſh for, from whence it may be inferred, that his natural powers had received comparatively but ſmall improvement from an academical education. An habitual diſpoſition to thought and reflection enabled him however upon his leaving it, to attain to that degree of improvement which, in many minds, is not effected without intenſe application and labour; and the ſentiments of piety which he had imbibed in his youth, directed him to thoſe ſtudies, which, without attending to ſecular rewards, he thought of greateſt importance to his future happineſs. In conformity to this motive, he applied himſelf to the ſtudy of the Holy Scriptures, and the evidences of religion, to the writings of the fathers and of the Greek moraliſts, to eccleſiaſtical and civil hiſtory, and to claſſical literature and philology.

The reſult of theſe his mental exerciſes was a thorough conviction of the truth of the Chriſtian religion, an adherence to the doctrine and diſcipline of our eſtabliſhed church, and to that form of civil government which we number among the bleſſings derived to us from the wiſdom and bravery of our anceſtors, with this farther advantage, that they rooted in his mind thoſe principles of religion, morality, and, I will add, loyalty, that influenced his conduct during the remainder of his life.

To ſpeak of the firſt, his religion, it had a tincture of enthuſiaſm, ariſing, as is conjectured, from the fervour of his imagination, and the peruſal of St. Auguſtine and other of the fathers, and the writings of Kempis and the aſcetics, which prompted him to the employments of compoſing meditations and devotional exerciſes,

tiſes. It farther produced in him an habitual reverence for the name of God, which he was never known to utter but on proper occaſions and with due reſpect, and operated on thoſe that were admitted to his converſation as a powerful reſtraint of all profane diſcourſe, and idle diſcuſſions of theological queſtions; and, laſtly, it inſpired him with that charity, meaning thereby a general concern for the welfare of all mankind, without which we are told that all pretenſions to religion are vain.

To enable him at times to review his progreſs in life, and to eſtimate his improvement in religion, he, in the year 1734, began to note down the tranſactions of each day, recollecting, as well as he was able, thoſe of his youth, and interſperſing ſuch reflections and reſolutions as, under particular circumſtances, he was induced to make. This regiſter, which he intitled 'Annales,' does not form an entire volume, but is contained in a variety of little books folded and ſtitched together by himſelf, and which were found mixed with his papers. Some ſpecimens of theſe notanda have been lately printed with his prayers; but to warrant what I have ſaid, reſpecting his religious character, I have ſelected from the 'Annales,' and inſert in the margin below, an earlier extract than any contained in that collection*.

His

* 'Friday, Auguſt 27th,' [1734] 'I 0 at night. This day I have 'trifled away, except that I have attended the ſchool in the morn-'ing. I read to night in Rogers's ſermons. To night I began the 'breakfaſt law anew.

'Sept. 7th, 1736. I have this day entered upon my 28th year. 'Mayeſt thou, O God, enable me for Jeſus Chriſt's ſake, to ſpend

His moral character diſplayed itſelf in the ſincerity of his friendſhips, his love of juſtice and of truth, and his placability; of all which qualities, the teſtimonies in his favour are innumerable. But as the character here propoſed to be given him is not intended to palliate his errors in behaviour, truth obliges me to ſay, that his outward deportment was in many inſtances a juſt ſubject of cenſure. Before his arrival in town, he was but little accuſtomed to free converſation with his ſuperiors, ſo that that kind of ſubmiſſion he had been uſed to pay them he ſeemed to exact from others, and when it was refuſed him he was petulant, captious, and dogged. His diſcourſe, which through life was of the didactic kind, was replete with original ſentiments expreſſed in the ſtrongeſt and moſt correct terms, and in ſuch language, that whoever could have heard and not ſeen him, would have thought him reading. For the pleaſure he communicated to his hearers, he expected not the tribute of ſilence: on the contrary, he encouraged others, particularly young men, to ſpeak, and paid a due attention to what they ſaid; but his prejudices were ſo ſtrong and deeply rooted, more eſpecially againſt Scotchmen and whigs, that whoever thwarted him ran the riſque of a ſevere rebuke, or at beſt became entangled in an unpleaſant altercation.

He was ſcarce ſettled in town before this dogmatical behaviour, and his impatience of contradiction, became

' this in ſuch a manner that I may receive comfort from it at the ' hour of death, and in the day of judgment. Amen.

' I intend to-morrow to review the rules I have at any time laid ' down, in order to practiſe them.'

a part

a part of his character, and deterred many perſons of learning, who wiſhed to enjoy the delight of his converſation, from ſeeking his acquaintance. There were not wanting thoſe among his friends who would ſometimes hint to him, that the conditions of free converſation imply an equality among thoſe engaged in it, which are violated whenever ſuperiority is aſſumed: their reproofs he took kindly, and would in excuſe for what they called the pride of learning, ſay, that it was of the defenſive kind. The repetition of theſe had, however, a great effect on him; they abated his prejudices, and produced a change in his temper and manners that rendered him at length a deſirable companion in the moſt polite circles.

In the leſſer duties of morality he was remiſs: he ſlept when he ſhould have ſtudied, and watched when he ſhould have been at reſt: his habits were ſlovenly, and the neglect of his perſon and garb ſo great as to render his appearance diſguſting. He was an ill huſband of his time, and ſo regardleſs of the hours of refection, that at two he might be found at breakfaſt, and at dinner at eight. In his ſtudies, and I may add, in his devotional exerciſes, he was both intenſe and remiſs, and in the proſecution of his literary employments, dilatory and haſty, unwilling, as himſelf confeſſed, to work, and working with vigour and haſte *.

His indolence, or rather the delight he took in reading and reflection, rendered him averſe to bodily exertions. He was ill made for riding, and took ſo

* See his prayers page 184.

little pleaſure in it, that, as he once told me, he has fallen aſleep on his horſe. Walking he ſeldom practiſed, perhaps for no better reaſon, than that it required the previous labour of dreſſing. In a word, mental occupation was his ſole pleaſure, and the knowledge he acquired in the purſuit of it he was ever ready to communicate: in which faculty he was not only excellent but expert; for, as it is related of lord Bacon by one who knew him*, that 'in all companies he appeared a good 'proficient, if not a maſter, in thoſe arts entertained for 'the ſubject of every one's diſcourſe,' and that 'his 'moſt caſual talk deſerved to be written,' ſo it may be ſaid of Johnſon, that his converſation was ever ſuited to the profeſſion, condition, and capacity of thoſe with whom he talked.

Of a mind thus ſtored it is ſurely not too much to ſay, that it qualified the poſſeſſor of it for many more important employments than the inſtruction of non-adults in the elements of literature; yet ſo humbly did he ſeem to think of himſelf when he publiſhed the advertiſement of his little academy at Edial, that to be able to eſtabliſh it, was the utmoſt of his ambition; but that hope failing, his neceſſities drove him to London, and placed him in the ſtation of life in which we are now to contemplate him.

It has been mentioned in a preceding page, that in the courſe of his ſtudies he had formed a liſt of literary undertakings, on which, when time ſhould ſerve or occaſion invite, he meant to exerciſe his pen: but ſuch was the verſatility of his temper, that of forty-nine articles which he had fixed

* Works of Francis Oſborn, Eſq; 8vo. 1673, page 151.

on,

on, not one appears to have engaged his future attention. Among the reſt he had purpoſed to give a hiſtory of the revival of learning in Europe, and alſo a compariſon of philoſophical and chriſtian morality, by ſentences collected from the moraliſts and fathers*. The former of theſe, as it required the labour of deep reſearch, and the peruſal of a great variety of authors, was a work that we may ſuppoſe he was deterred from by frequent reflections on the pains it would coſt him; but that he ſhould abandon a work ſo eaſy in the execution, and ſo much to the credit of the religion he profeſſed, as the latter, is not leſs to be wondered at than lamented.

Theſe projects of Johnſon were moſt of them reſolved on in his earlier days, but it is not improbable that he was induced to give them up by the proſpect of the gain that might ariſe from the publication of a new edition of Shakeſpeare, which it is certain he meditated, about the year 1745. To an undertaking of this kind the temptations were very ſtrong, for, beſides that the former editors had fallen ſhort in their endeavours to explain and ſettle the text, he had great reaſon to hope it would be well received, for at that time it was obſervable, that the taſte of the public was refining, and that the lovers of ſtage entertainments and dramatic literature had begun to nauſeate the tragedies and comedies of the laſt age, which were formed after French models, and to diſcern the beauties and excellencies of this author.

* Vide ſupra, page 83, 84. in not.

That this hope was not ill-grounded, may reaſonably be inferred from the ſucceſs of thoſe many editions of this author that have appeared ſince the above time, of one whereof above eleven thouſand copies have been ſold, and next, from the effects of Mr. Garrick's acting, which had revived the exhibition of Shakeſpeare's plays, and excited readers of every claſs to the peruſal of them.

But, perhaps, the greateſt of Johnſon's temptations to this undertaking, ſaving at all times his neceſſities, was, a deſire to diſplay his ſkill in Engliſh literature and rational criticiſm in their wideſt extent, in both which requiſites the deficiences of the former editions were obvious. Of thoſe of the players and others, down to the year 1685, little in favour can be ſaid: the firſt that made any pretenſions to correctneſs was that of Rowe in 1709, and next to that, Mr. Pope's in 4to, 1723. Whatever otherwere the merits of theſe two perſons, it is certain that neither of them was ſufficiently qualified for the taſk he had undertaken; not that they wanted the power of diſcerning the excellences of their author, or clearing his page of many corruptions that had long obſcured his ſenſe, but that they were deficient in that lower kind of literature, without which all endeavours to fix or explain the text of an old writer will ever be found to be vain.

To this kind of knowledge, as far as may be judged from the courſe of his ſtudies, and indeed from the preface to his edition, Rowe had not the leaſt pretenſion. Nor does it appear that Pope was at all converſant with, or that he underſtood the phraſeology

of

of the writers contemporary with his author. So little was he uſed to that kind of reading, that, as himſelf confeſſed, he had never heard of the Virgidemiarum of biſhop Hall, a collection of the wittieſt and moſt pointed ſatires in our language, till it was ſhewn to him, and that ſo late in his life, that he could only expreſs his approbation of it by a wiſh that he had ſeen it ſooner. That vernacular erudition, contemptible as it has been repreſented, is an indiſpenſable qualification for the reſtoring or explaining the ſenſe of corrupted or obſolete authors, and even of thoſe more recent, is moſt clearly evidenced in one caſe by the later editions of our great dramatic poet, and in the other by Dr. Grey's edition of Hudibras, without the aſſiſtance whereof, the many alluſions to facts, circumſtances, and ſituations therein contained, muſt for ever have remained unintelligible. Theobald was the firſt of this claſs of editors. For the purpoſe of publiſhing Shakeſpeare, he, in the preface to his firſt edition, aſſerts, that he had read no fewer than eight hundred old Engliſh plays, beſides hiſtories and novels to a great amount; and the ſame kind of ſtudy has, with different degrees of aſſiduity, been purſued by others, even to the laſt of his ſucceſſors.

With theſe inducements, and the aid of two valuable editions then extant, Theobald's and that of Sir Thomas Hanmer, Johnſon projected a new one, and, as a ſpecimen of his abilities for the undertaking, publiſhed in the year 1745, 'Miſcellaneous obſervations on the tragedy of Macbeth, with remarks on 'Sir Thomas Hanmer's edition of Shakeſpeare,' with propoſals for one by himſelf. Theſe obſervations, as

they go rather to adjuſt the various readings, and ſettle the text by conjectural notes, than explain alluſions, did not enough attract the notice of the public to induce him actually to engage in the work; they were however evidences of great ſagacity, and drew from Dr. Warburton a teſtimony that ſet him above all other competitors; for thus does he ſpeak of Johnſon: 'As to 'all thoſe things which have been publiſhed under 'the titles of Eſſays, Remarks, Obſervations, &c. on 'Shakeſpeare, (if you except ſome critical notes on 'Macbeth, given as a ſpecimen of a projected edition, 'and written as appears by a man of parts and genius) 'the reſt are abſolutely below a ſerious notice;' and Johnſon, who never forgot a kindneſs, remembered it by mentioning Warburton in terms of great reſpect, as occaſion offered, in his edition of Shakeſpeare, which he publiſhed many years after.

By this and other of Johnſon's writings, his reputation as a ſcholar and a philologiſt was ſo well eſtabliſhed, that the bookſellers of greateſt opulence in the city, who had long meditated the publication of a dictionary, after the model of thoſe of France and the Academia della Cruſca, looked upon him as a fit perſon to be employed in ſuch an undertaking. He was at that time in the vigour of his life, and by the offer of a liberal reward from men of ſuch known worth as thoſe were who made it, was tempted to engage with them, and accordingly ſet himſelf to compile that work, which, he living to complete it, does him and all concerned in it great honour.

Nor can we ſuppoſe but that he was in a great meaſ
to the proſecution of this laborious work
by

by a reflection on the ſtate of our language at this time, from the imperfection of all Engliſh dictionaries then extant, and the great diſtance in point of improvement in this kind of literature between us and ſome of our neighbours. And here let me take occaſion, by an enumeration of the ſeveral authors that had gone before him, to point out the ſources of that intelligence which Johnſon's voluminous work contains.

Of Latin dictionaries and ſuch as give the ſignifications of Engliſh appellatives with a view only to illuſtrate the Latin, he muſt be ſuppoſed to have made ſome uſe, and of theſe the earlieſt is Sir Thomas Elyot's Bibliotheca Eliotæ, publiſhed in 1541. This was improved by Cooper after many years' labor, by the addition of 33000 words, and publiſhed in 1565 in a large folio, and was a reaſon with Queen Elizabeth for promoting him to the biſhopric of Lincoln.*

In 1572 was publiſhed an Alvearie or quadruple dictionary of four ſundry tongues, namely, Engliſh, Latin, Greek and French, by John Baret of Cambridge, compiled with the aſſiſtance of his pupils, but arranged and methodized by himſelf. This fact he ingenuouſly

* The following fact reſpecting this work remains upon record, viz. that his wife burnt the notes that he had been eight years gathering, and that he was other eight years in gathering the ſame notes wherewith he compoſed his dictionary. Her pretence was fear that he ſhould kill himſelf with ſtudy; but ſhe was a ſhrew and infamous for lewdneſs.

confeſſed

confeſſed in his preface, which, as a literary curioſity, is inſerted below.†

To Baret's ſucceeded John Minſheu's Guide into the tongues, firſt publiſhed in 1617 in eleven, and in 1627 in nine languages, but with a conſiderable increaſe in the number of radical words. In this the author undertakes to give the etymologies or derivations of the greater part of the words therein contained, but as they amount at the moſt to no more than 14713, the work muſt be deemed not ſufficiently copious.

In 1656, Thomas Blount a lawyer of the Inner Temple, publiſhed a ſmall volume, intitled 'Gloſſo-graphia,

† 'About eighteene yeeres agone, hauing pupils at Cambridge 'ſtudious of the Latine tongue, I vſed them often to write epiſtles 'and theames together, and dailie to tranſlate ſome peece of Eng-'liſh into Latine, for the more ſpeedie and eaſie attaining of the 'ſame. And after we had a little begun, perceiuing what great 'trouble it was to come running to me for euerie worde they miſſed, '(knowing then of no other dictionarie to helpe vs, but Sir *Thomas* '*Eliot*'s librarie, which was come out a little before:) I appointed 'them certaine leaues of the ſame booke euerie daie to write the 'Engliſh before the Latin, and likewiſe to gather a number of fine 'phraſes out of *Cicero*, *Terence*, *Cæſar*, *Liuie*, &c. & to ſet them 'vnder ſeuerall titles, for the more readie finding them againe at 'their neede. Thus within a yeere or two, they had gathered 'together a great volume, which (for the apt ſimilitude betweene 'the good ſcholers and diligent bees in gathering their waxe and 'honie into their hiue) I called then their *Alueare*, both for a 'memoriall, by whom it was made, and alſo by this name to in-'courage other to the like diligence, for that they ſhould not ſee 'ſo worthie praiſe for the ſame, vnworthilie drowned in obliuion.

'Long after, diuers of our friends borrowing this our worke 'had thus contriued and wrought onelie for our owne 'priuate vſe, often and many waies moued me to put it in print

'for

'graphia, or a dictionary interpreting ſuch hard words,' 'whether Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Italian, &c. that 'are now uſed in our refined Engliſh tongue, &c.' in which the articles though few are well explained. This book, as far as it went, was of ſingular uſe to Edward Philips, a nephew and pupil of Milton, in the compilation of a dictionary by him publiſhed in folio, 1657, intitled 'The New World of Words,' which, as it is much more copious than that of Blount, and comprehends a great quantity of matter, muſt be looked on as the baſis of Engliſh lexicography.

Of technical as alſo of etymological dictionaries, many have long been extant, namely, The Interpreter

'for the common profit of others, and the publike propagation of 'the Latine tongue, or els to ſuffer them to get it printed at their 'proper coſtes and charges. But I both vnwilling, and halfe aſhamed 'to haue our rude notes come abroad vnder the view of ſo manie 'learned eies, & eſpeciallie finding no leaſure from my prefixed 'ſtudies for the poliſhing of the ſame, vtterlie denied their requeſt, 'vntil at length comming to London, the right worſhipfull maiſter '*Powle*, & maiſter *Garth*, with other, ſingular fauourers of all good 'learning, and my verie eſpeciall friends, with their importunate 'and earneſt exhortations had cleane ouercome my contrarie mind. 'Then immediatelie laieng aſide all other ſtudies, I was faine to 'ſeeke for writers and workemen about the ſame, to make it readie 'for the preſſe. Therefore I went to diuers of mine old pupils then 'being at the Innes of Court, delivering ech of them ſome part of 'their old diſcontinued worke to ſee it written faire againe, and 'for other peeces which I thought vnperfect, I gat certaine of the 'beſt ſcholers of two or three ſcholes in London, to write after my 'preſcription: but in the French tables, although I had before 'trauelled in diuers countries beyond the ſeas, both for language and 'learning: yet not truſting to mine owne ſkill, I vſed the helpe of 'M. *Chaloner*, and M. *Claudius*. Upon this occaſion I being 'much conuerſant about the Innes of Court, and alſo ſome time occu-

'pied

preter or Law Dictionary of Dr. Cowell a civilian, a Common-Law Dictionary of the above Thomas Blount, the Etymologicum of Junius, and another of Skinner, both well known and frequently referred to, and of theſe did Johnſon avail himſelf.

The dictionary of Nathan Bailey a ſchool-maſter, was firſt publiſhed in a thick octavo volume, ſo well diſpoſed with reſpect to the character and method of printing, as to contain more matter than could otherwiſe have been comprized in a volume of that ſize. After it had paſſed many editions with improvements by the author himſelf, he meditated an enlargement of it, and being aſſiſted in the

' pied among ſcholers in the ſcholes, there came vnto me a printer ' ſhewing me *Hulœts* dictionarie (which before I neuer ſawe) and ' told me he intended to print it out of hand, augmented with our ' notes alſo if I would. But this bargaine went not forward with ' him for diuers cauſes which here it were to long to reherſe. And ' ſurelie, had not the right honourable Sir *Thomas Smith* knight, ' principall ſecretarie to the Queenes Maieſtie, that noble *Theſeus* ' of learning, and comfortable patrone to all ſtudents, and the right ' worſhipfull M. *Nowell* deane of Pawles, manie waies encouraged ' me in this wearie worke (the charges were ſo great, and the loſſe ' of my time ſo much grieued me) I had never bene able alone to ' haue wreſtled againſt ſo manie troubles, but long ere this had ' cleane broken off our worke begun, and caſt it by for euer.

' Now therefore (gentle reader) looke not to finde in this booke ' euerie thing whatſoeuer thou wouldeſt ſeeke for, as though all ' things were here ſo perfect that nothing lacked, or were poſſible ' to be added hereunto. But if thou maieſt onelie find here the ' moſt wordes that thou needeſt, or at the leaſt ſo manie as no other ' dictionarie yet extant, or made hath the like: take them I ſaie in ' good part this our ſimple *Aluearie* in the meane time, and goue ' God the praiſe that firſt moued me to ſet my pupils on worke ' thereabout, and ſo mercifullie alſo hath ſtrengthened vs (thus as it ' is) at length to atchieue and finiſh the ſame.'

mathematical

thematical part by Mr. Gordon, in the botanical the famous gardener Philip Miller, and in the ety- logical by Mr. Lediard, a profeſſor of the modern guages, it was publiſhed in a folio ſize. The laſt rovement of it was by Dr. Joſeph Nicoll Scott, , of a diſſenting teacher had become a phyſician l a writer for the bookſellers.

ſohnſon, who before this time, together with his e, had lived in obſcurity, lodging at different houſes the courts and alleys in and about the Strand and et ſtreet, had, for the purpoſe of carrying on this uous work, and being near the printers employed it, taken a handſome houſe in Gough ſquare, and ed up a room in it with deſks and other accommo- ions for amanuenſes, who, to the number of five or , he kept conſtantly under his eye. An interleaved y of Bailey's dictionary in folio he made the repo- ry of the ſeveral articles, and theſe he collected by eſſant reading the beſt authors in our language, he practice whereof, his method was to ſcore with lack-lead pencil the words by him ſelected, and e them over to his aſſiſtants to inſert in their places. e books he uſed for this purpoſe were what he had his own collection, a copious but a miſerably ragged , and all ſuch as he could borrow; which latter, if r they came back to thoſe that lent them, were ſo aced as to be ſcarce worth owning, and yet, ſome of friends were glad to receive and entertain them as ioſities.

It ſeems that Johnſon had made a conſiderable greſs in his work when he was informed, that the l of Cheſterfield had heard and ſpoken favourably his deſign. He had never till this time experi-

enced

enced the patronage of any other than bookſellers, and though he had but an indiſtinct idea of that of a nobleman, a reputed wit, and an accompliſhed courtier, and doubted whether he was to rate it among the happy incidents of his life, it might mean a liberal preſent or an handſome penſion to encourage him in the proſecution of the work; he therefore reſolved not to reject it by a ſupercilious compariſon of his own talents with thoſe of his lordſhip, or to ſlight a favour which he was not able to eſtimate. Accordingly, he in the year 1747, drew up and dedicated to lord Cheſterfield, then a ſecretary of ſtate, a plan of his dictionary, the manuſcript whereof he delivered to Mr. Whitehead the late laureat, who undertook to convey it to his lordſhip, but he having communicated it firſt to another perſon, it paſſed through other hands before it reached that to which it was immediately directed: the reſult was an invitation from lord Cheſterfield to the author.

Never could there be a ſtronger contraſt of characters than this interview produced: a ſcholar and a courtier, the one ignorant of the forms and modes of addreſs, the other, to an affected degree, accompliſhed in both: the one in a manly and ſententious ſtile directing his diſcourſe to a weighty ſubject; the other dreading to incur the imputation of pedantry, ıd by the interpoſition of compliments and the intro- ıion of new topics as artfully endeavouring to evade The quaintance thus commenced was never im- ıved i friendſhip. What his lordſhip thought J ſ may learn from his letters to an illegi- extant*. Johnſon was ſo little pleaſed

* Letter 220.

with his once ſuppoſed patron, that he forbore not ever after to ſpeak of him in terms of the greateſt contempt.

How far Johnſon was right in his opinion of this popular nobleman, or whether he is to be ſuſpected of having reſented more than he ought to have done, the coldneſs of his reception, or the diſappointment of his hopes, will beſt appear by a ſurvey of his character, as it ariſes out of the memoirs of his life prefixed to his miſcellaneous works, and the ſentiments and principles which, for the inſtruction of his ſon, he, in a courſe of letters to him, from time to time communicated, and with the utmoſt ſolicitude laboured to inculcate and enforce.

His lordſhip's deſcent was from an illuſtrious, though not a very ancient family. Being, as himſelf relates, rather neglected by his father, and in his tender years bereft of his mother, the care of his education devolved on his grandmother, the marchioneſs of Halifax, a woman of exemplary virtue and diſcretion, who fearing, perhaps, the contagion of a public ſeminary, kept him in her family, and with the beſt aſſiſtance of inſtructors that ſhe could procure, conferred on him all the benefits that could be hoped for in a courſe of domeſtic education.

At the age of eighteen he was ſent to Trinity hall, Cambridge, where, as he informs us, he had a great deal of buſineſs on his hands, for he ſpent above an hour every day in ſtudying the civil law, and as much in philoſophy, and attended the mathematical lectures of the blind man [profeſſor Saunderſon] ſo that, adds he, I am now fully employed. But notwithſtanding

withſtanding this intenſe application to his ſtudies, this hopeful young nobleman ſeems to have brought from the univerſity leſs of what all ſuch ſeminaries profeſs to teach, ſound learning and good morals, than a hatred of that pedantry and illiberality of manners, which, throughout his writings, he reprobates as the inſeparable concomitant of all academical inſtitutions.

As I have not taken upon me the office of his lordſhip's biographer, I ſhall content myſelf with mentioning only thoſe circumſtances of his life and conduct that may ſerve to diſplay his genuine character, and enable the world to determine whether it was ſuch a one as a wiſe man would chuſe as a model for imitation, or the ſtandard by which he would form his own.

After about two years ſtay at the univerſity, lord Stanhope, for that was then his only title, went abroad to travel, and at that enchanting place the Hague, began to be acquainted with the world. The college ruſt, which, if we may believe his panegyriſt, he contracted in the univerſity during ſo long a reſidence there, he found means to rub off, and exchanged for the poliſh of gaming, which rendered him the dupe of knaves and ſharpers almoſt throughout his life, and this not from any real propenſity to this pernicious vice, ariſing either from avarice or the exerciſe of thoſe mental powers that make it a delight to many, but to acquire, what throughout his life he ſeems to have above all things been [illegible]ſirous of, the inſipid character of a man of faſh[illegible].

Nat[illegible], it muſt be owned, had endowed him with [illegible]s, [illegible]d theſe he cultivated with all the induſtry [illegible]ly [illegible]tiſed by ſuch as prefer the ſemblance of what

what is really fit, juſt, lovely, honourable, to the qualities themſelves; thus he had eloquence without learning, complaiſance without friendſhip, and gallantry without love.

Not much to his honour, he, in the year 1715, ſuffered himſelf to be choſen for a Corniſh borough, and took his ſeat in the houſe of commons, at an age when it was in the power of any ſingle member, by the ſpeaking of a very few words, to have turned him out of it. Upon a hint of his incapacity, occaſioned by a pert ſpeech of his making, he had the prudence to quit the houſe and retire to Paris, glad of an opportunity of finiſhing his noviciate in a city that abounded with thoſe pleaſures and amuſements that beſt ſuit with a mind to which ſtudy and the rational exerciſe of its faculties are labour.

Upon the death of his father in 1726, he ſucceeded to his title, and his ſeat in the houſe of peers. His ſpeeches in that aſſembly, which were, though flimſy, florid, gave him, as that ſpecies of eloquence will ever do, the reputation of a fine orator; and in this he was ſo confident, that he has not ſcrupled to confeſs, that he has ſpoken with great applauſe, as on the bill for reforming the calendar, on ſubjects that he underſtood not. 'For my own part,' ſays he, 'I could juſt 'as ſoon have talked Celtic or Sclavonian to them [the 'lords] as aſtronomy, and they would have underſtood 'me full as well; ſo I reſolved to do better than ſpeak 'to the purpoſe, and to pleaſe inſtead of informing 'them;' and for this he gives as a reaſon, what perhaps will be found to be a true one, that every nu-

* Letters to his ſon, number 215.

merous aſſembly is a mob, and to ſuch a one reaſon and good ſenſe are never to be talked.

In addition to his character of an orator and a ſtateſman, he was emulous of that of a poet, his pretenſions to which were founded on ſundry little compoſitions in verſe that from time to time appeared in collections of that kind; elegant it muſt be confeſſed; but generally immoral and oft times profane.

His diſſimulation, deep and refined as it was, did not lead him to profeſs any ſincere regard to virtue or religion: the groſſer immoralities he affects to ſpeak of with abhorrence; but ſuch as might be practiſed without the loſs of health and reputation he ſeemed to think there was no law againſt. He was therefore, if ſecret, vain in his amours, and though, ſetting aſide his mien, his perſon had little to recommend it, for he was low of ſtature, had coarſe features, and a cadaverous complexion*, his confidence in the proſecution of them was ſuch as expoſed him to greater riſques of perſonal ſafety than moſt men would chuſe to run; and of this I ſhall now produce an inſtance.

A lady of high quality, and a relation of one who had the ſtory from her own mouth and told it me, having been married ſome few years but never having brought her lord a child, was ſurpriſed one morning by a viſit from lord Cheſterfield, whom ſhe had frequently ſeen and converſed with at court. After the uſual compli-

* He was alſo long-viſaged and long-necked, but from the ſhoul-s to the waiſt very ſhort, which a wit once obſerving, ſaid, he a giant cut down, alluding to the practice of cutting down ſhips to render them more active.

ments

to leave them the power of flexure. In a word, in infancy he was ſhapeleſs, and in youth a looby. Never did a ſhe-bear with more anxious aſſiduity labour to lick her cub into ſhape than this fond parent did to correct the errors of nature in the formation of this his darling: the head, the ſhoulders and the hands, were, by turns, the objects of his care; but the legs and feet ſeem to have engaged moſt of his attention: theſe upon his being ſent abroad, were committed to the care of a dancing-maſter at Paris, whoſe inſtructions he eſtimates at a higher rate than the precepts of Ariſtotle*. He recommends to form his manners les agrémens et les graces,† les manieres, la tournure, et les uſages du beau monde‡; and is perpetually reminding him of that trite maxim 'Suaviter in modo, fortiter in 're.'‖

The beſt furniture of a young man's mind are the precepts of religion and ſound morality. Not a word of either of theſe do we meet with in two quarto volumes of thoſe letters which I am now citing, but in them precepts of a different kind, ſuch as reſpect his pleaſures, abound. Aſſuming an air of ſapience, which was not very natural to his lordſhip, he remarks, that in the courſe of the world the qualifications of the cameleon are often neceſſary, nay, they muſt be carried a little farther, and exerted a little ſooner; 'for 'you ſhould,' adds he, 'to a certain degree take the 'hue of either the man or woman that you want and 'wiſh to be upon terms with.' Fatherly curioſity then prompts him to an enquiry into certain particulars, which theſe his own words will go near to explain:—

* 215. † Letter 214. ‡ Letter 217. ‖ Letter 213.

'Apropos:

'Apropos: have you yet found out at Paris any 'friendly and hoſpitable Madame de Lurſay, qui veut 'bien ſe charger du ſoin de vous éduquer? And have 'you had any occaſion of repreſenting to her, qu'elle 'faiſoit donc des nœuds? But I aſk your pardon, 'Sir, for the abruptneſs of the queſtion, and acknow-'ledge that I am meddling with matters that are out 'of my department. However, in matters of leſs 'importance I deſire to be de vos ſecrets le fidele dé-'poſitaire. Truſt me with the general turn and 'colour of your amuſements at Paris. Is it le fracas 'du grand monde, comédies, bals, opéras, cour, '&c.? Or is it des petites ſocietés moins bruiantes 'mais pas pour cela moins agréables? Where are you 'the moſt établi? Where are you le petit Stanhope? 'Voyez vous encore jour, à quelque arrangement 'honnête?' Letter 212.

Farther to initiate him into vice, he recommends to him the 'turning over men by day and women 'by night,' for thus it pleaſes him to render the precept Nocturna verſate manu verſate diurna*; and with matchleſs effrontery and total diſregard for the perſonal ſafety of him whom he is inſtructing, adviſes him, in effect, to riſque being run through the body, or the breaking his neck out of a bed-chamber window, by commencing an intrigue with a new-married and virtuous young lady. Hear the documents of our Metnor to this purpoſe: 'Go,' ſays he, 'among 'women, with the good qualities of your ſex, and you 'will acquire from them the ſoftneſs and the graces of 'theirs. Men will then add affection to the eſteem

* Letter 217.

'which they before had for you.—Women are the 'only refiners of the merit of men: it is true they 'cannot add weight; but they poliſh and give 'luſtre to it. Apropos: I am aſſured that Madame de Blot, although ſhe has no great regularity of 'features, is notwithſtanding, exceſſively pretty, and 'that for all that, ſhe has as yet been ſcrupulouſly 'conſtant to her huſband, though ſhe has now been 'married above a year. Surely ſhe does not reflect 'that woman wants poliſhing. I would have you 'poliſh one another reciprocally. Aſſiduities, attentions, tender looks, and paſſionate declarations 'on your ſide, will produce ſome irreſolute wiſhes at 'leaſt on hers, and when even the ſlighteſt wiſhes 'ariſe, the reſt will ſoon follow *.'

Finally, to attain theſe and the other ends which his lordſhip points out as the objects of his ſon's purſuit, he inculcates in the ſtrongeſt terms the practice of thoſe arts of crooked cunning, which, as lord Bacon has remarked, oftner defeat than effect their purpoſe, and together with theſe, the general exerciſe of that diſſimulation which was one of the moſt prominent features in his own character.

The letters from lord Cheſterfield to his ſon are two hundred and eighty-five in number. The precepts contained in them are multifarious, and it is to be feared that they have not only been adopted by many i[illegible]nt parents and indiſcreet tutors, but that they [illegible]ly tended to corrupt the morals of the [illegible]ation. As an antidote to the poiſon t[illegible] muſt be ſuppoſed to have diffuſed, I ſhall

* Letter 218.

here

'the matter of that you read, as well as the words;
'ſo ſhall you both enrich your tongue with words,
'and your wit with matter, and judgment will grow
'as years grow in you. Be humble and obedient
'to your maſter; for unleſs you frame yourſelf to
'obey others, yea and feel in yourſelf what obedi-
'ence is, you ſhall never be able to teach others how
'to obey you. Be courteous of geſture, and affable
'to all men, with diverſity of reverence according to
'the dignity of the perſon: there is nothing that
'winneth ſo much with ſo little coſt. Uſe moderate
'diet, ſo as after your meat you may find your wit
'freſher and not duller, and your body more lively
'and not more heavy. Seldom drink wine, and yet
'ſometime do, leſt being inforced to drink upon the
'ſudden you ſhould find yourſelf inflamed. Uſe ex-
'erciſe of body, but ſuch as is without peril of your
'joints or bones: it will increaſe your force and en-
'large your breath. Delight to be cleanly as well in
'all parts of your body as in your garments: it ſhall
'make you grateful in each company, and otherwiſe
'loathſome. Give yourſelf to be merry; for you
'degenerate from your father if you find not yourſelf
'moſt able in wit and body to do any thing when you
'be moſt merry: but let your mirth be ever void of
'all ſcurrility and biting words to any man, for a
'wound given by a word is oftentimes harder to be
'cured than that which is given with the ſword. Be
'y rat r a hearer and bearer away of other mens'
'k a beginner or procurer of ſpeech, otherwiſe
be counted to delight to hear yourſelf
'you hear a wiſe ſentence or an apt phraſe,
'commit

'as I find the ſame grow ſtronger, feed it with tougher 'food.

'Your loving father, ſo long as
'you live in the fear of God,
'H. SYDNEY.' *

The hopeful documents contained in this inſtitute of politeneſs, lord Cheſterfield's letters to his ſon, failed in a great meaſure of their end. His lordſhip's intereſt with the miniſtry, founded on a ſeat in parliament, which, though a great declaimer againſt corruption, he bought as he would have done a horſe, procured him the appointment of an envoy-extraordinary to the court of Dreſden. We find not that the young man had any female attachments, but that on the contrary he had more grace than his father. He married a woman, who becoming a widow, and provoked by real or imaginary ill treatment of lord Cheſterfield, publiſhed thoſe letters, which, had he been living, he would have given almoſt any thing to have ſuppreſſed, as they ſhew him to have been a man devoted to pleaſure, and actuated by vanity, without religious, moral, or political principles, a ſmatterer in learning, and in manners a coxcomb.

Such was the perſon whom Johnſon in the ſimplicity of his heart choſe for a patron, and was betrayed to celebrate as the Mecænas of the age; and ſuch was the opinion he had conceived of his ſkill in literature, his love of eloquence, and his zeal for the intereſts of learning, that he approached him with the utmoſt reſpect, leſt he might not err in his manner of expreſſing

* Sydney papers, vol. 1. page 8.

it,

mind, he thus delineates the perſon, who, in language the moſt nervous and elegant had endeavoured to render him reſpectable in the republic of letters, and in that particular to do for him what he was never able to do for himſelf. 'There is a man whoſe moral character, deep learning, and ſuperior parts, I acknowledge, admire, and reſpect; but whom it is ſo impoſſible for me to love, that I am almoſt in a fever whenever I am in his company. His figure (without being deformed) ſeems made to diſgrace or ridicule the common ſtructure of the human body. His legs and arms are never in the poſition which, according to the ſituation of his body, they ought to be in, but conſtantly employed in committing acts of hoſtility upon the graces. He throws any where, but down his throat, whatever he means to drink, and only mangles what he means to carve. Inattentive to all the regards of ſocial life, he miſ-times and miſ-places every thing. He diſputes with heat, and indiſcriminately, mindleſs of the rank, character, and ſituation of them with whom he diſputes: abſolutely ignorant of the ſeveral gradations of familiarity and reſpect, he is exactly the ſame to his ſuperiors, his equals, and his inferiors; and therefore, by a neceſſary conſequence, abſurd to two of the three. Is it poſſible to love ſuch a man? No. The utmoſt I can do for him, is, to conſider him as a reſpectable Hottentot*.' Had Socrates been living, and not learned, as we are told he did in his old age, to dance, lord Cheſterfield had paſſed the ſame cenſure on him.

Johnſon was, by this time, able to determine on a ſtep which, in his addreſs to this nobleman, he expreſſes

* Letter 212.

perſon than for any eſtimable qualities *; the other an eminent painter now living. Theſe were inſtructed to apologize for his lordſhip's treatment of him, and to make him tenders of his future friendſhip and patronage. Sir Thomas, whoſe talent was flattery, was profuſe in his commendations of Johnſon and his writings, and declared that were his circumſtances other than they were, himſelf would ſettle five hundred pounds a year on him. 'And who are you,' aſked Johnſon, 'that talk thus liberally?' 'I am,' ſaid the other, 'Sir Thomas Robinſon, a Yorkſhire baronet.' 'Sir,' replied Johnſon, 'if the firſt peer of the realm 'were to make me ſuch an offer, I would ſhew him 'the way down ſtairs.'

No one will commend this manner of declining an intentional kindneſs, even where the ſincerity of the intention might be doubtful, but the rejecting it with a menace was both unneceſſary and inſolent. The pride of independence

* This perſon who is now at reſt in Weſtminſter-abbey, was, when living, diſtinguiſhed by the name of long Sir Thomas Robinſon. He was a man of the world or rather of the town, and a great peſt to perſons of high rank or in office. He was very troubleſome to the late duke of Newcaſtle, and when in his viſits to him he was told that his Grace was gone out, would deſire to be admitted to look at the clock, or to play with a monkey that was kept in the hall, in hopes of being ſent for in to the duke. This he had ſo frequently done, that all in the houſe were tired of him. At length it was concerted among the ſervants that he ſhould receive a ſummary anſwer to his uſual queſtions, and accordingly at his next coming, the porter as ſoon as he had opened the gate and without waiting for what he had to ſay, diſmiſſed him with theſe words, 'Sir, his Grace is gone out, the clock ſtands, and the monkey is dead.'

WAS

was moſt ſtrong in Johnſon at thoſe periods of his life when his wants were greateſt, and though at other times he would ſubject himſelf to great obligations, he was uniform, except only in one inſtance, in an opinion that an offer of pecuniary aſſiſtance was an inſult, and not ſeldom rejected it with ſuch indignation, that were I to characteriſe it more particularly, I ſhould do it by an alluſion to the following apologue: A gardener's dog had fallen into a well and was unable to get out: his maſter paſſing by, and ſeeing his diſtreſs, put down his arm to ſave him: the dog bit his hand, and the gardener left him to drown.

The uneaſineſs which Johnſon felt, at the time when he wrote the above-mentioned letter, gave way to a call of his friend Garrick, who in the ſame year, 1747, was, by a ſeries of occurrences, become maſter of Drury-lane theatre. I was never much converſant with the hiſtory of the ſtage, and therefore can give but a ſlight account of an event, which, at that time, intereſted many, and was deemed a very important one. Mr. Fleetwood's extravagance had reduced him to the neceſſity of ſeeking out for ſome one or more perſons to whom, for an adequate conſideration, he might relinquiſh his intereſt in the patent. At that time a man of the name of Lacy had attracted the notice of the town by a competition with orator Henley, which he began at the great room in York buildings, with a ſatirical diſcourſe of great licence, which he advertiſed by the name of Peter's viſitation. The liberties he had taken with the clergy and the principal officers of ſtate in this ludicrous diſcourſe gave great

offence: he was ſeized, dealt with as a vagrant, and, in ſhort, ſilenced. This man had lived among players, and was ſuppoſed to underſtand ſtage-management, and had ſome friends. Mr. Garrick had many, and thoſe opulent men: three of them, Mr. Draper the partner of Mr. Tonſon the bookſeller, Mr. Clutterbuck a mercer, and Mr. Samuel Sharpe one of the ſurgeons of Guy's hoſpital, negociated a partnerſhip between thoſe two perſons, and by purchaſing of them and aſſiſting them to diſpoſe of what are called renters' ſhares, enabled them to buy out Fleetwood, and before the commencement of the acting ſeaſon, they were become joint-patentees of the theatre above-mentioned.

Mr. Garrick's province in the management was to appoint the plays and to caſt the parts; Lacy's was to ſuperintend the workmen and ſervants, to order the ſcenery, and, with the aſſiſtance of artiſts, to adjuſt the ornaments and decorations. It was their reſolution to baniſh from their ſtage, pantomimes and all groteſque repreſentations, and to exhibit ſuch only as a rational and judicious audience might be ſuppoſed inclined to approve.

To notify this their intention to the town, it ſeemed to them that a prologue was neceſſary: Johnſon was eaſily prevailed upon by Mr. Garrick to write one, and at the opening of the theatre in 1747, it was ſpoken by the latter in a manner that did equal honour to the author and himſelf.

Prologues are addreſſes from the ſtage to the people, and either reſpect merely the drama that is to follow, or are of more general import ſetting forth to the audience the views and deſigns of managers, their

their anxiety to pleaſe, and the methods by which they hope to obtain the favour of the public: theſe latter are for the moſt part occaſional, and adapted to ſuch circumſtances as the opening a new theatre, a change of management, or any other of thoſe great theatrical revolutions in which the players affect to think all men as much intereſted as themſelves. In the addreſſes of this kind the powers of wit ſeem to have been nearly exhauſted: ſometimes the audience has been cajoled, at others, betrayed into good humour; and by the help of allegory, the ſtage has been made to reſemble every thing unlike it. One poet feigns that the town is a ſea, the playhouſe a ſhip, the manager the captain, the players ſailors, and the orange-girls powder-monkies; and Mr. Garrick, in one of his prologues, would make his audience believe, that his theatre is a tavern, himſelf the maſter, the players waiters, and his entertainment wines ſuited to all palates: one of his liquors, in particular, he ſtrongly recommends, and calls Shakeſpeare, which that he may be conſtantly able to ſupply, he ſays it is

'———————— his wiſh, his plan,
'To loſe no drop of that immortal man.' *

And, to be more particular, that

'———————— to delight ye,
'Bardolph is gin, and Piſtol aqua-vitæ.' †

Johnſon's prologue is of a very different caſt. It is a ſober, rational, and manly appeal to the good

* Prologue to the Winter's Tale and Catherine and Petruchio.
† Ibid.

ſenſe and candour of the audience, and contains a brief hiſtory of theatric repreſentations from the time of Shakeſpeare and Jonſon to their decline, when, as he ſays, the writers of pantomime and ſong had confirmed the ſway of folly. It ſtates the hardſhips which thoſe lye under, whoſe buſineſs it is to furniſh entertainment for the public, in being obliged to watch the wild viciſſitudes of taſte, and exhorts the hearers to patronize virtue and reviving ſenſe.

To juſtify the above character of this nervous compoſition I here inſert it:

'When Learning's triumph o'er her barb'rous foes
'Firſt rear'd the ſtage, immortal Shakeſpeare roſe;
'Each change of many-colour'd life he drew,
'Exhauſted worlds, and then imagin'd new:
'Exiſtence ſaw him ſpurn her bounded reign,
'And panting Time toil'd after him in vain.
'His powerful ſtrokes preſiding Truth impreſs'd,
'And unreſiſted Paſſion ſtorm'd the breaſt.
'Then Jonſon came, inſtructed from the ſchool
'To pleaſe in method, and invent by rule;
'His ſtudious patience, and laborious art,
'By regular approach, eſſay'd the heart:
'Cold approbation gave the lingering bays;
'For thoſe who durſt not cenſure, ſcarce could praiſe.
'A mortal born, he met the general doom,
'But left, like Egypt's kings, a laſting tomb.
'The wits of Charles found eaſier ways to fame,
'Nor ſh'd for Jonſon's art, or Shakeſpeare's flame.
'T ves they ſtudied; as they felt, they writ:
plot, obſcenity was wit.

'Vice

'Vice always found a ſympathetic friend;
'They pleas'd their age, and did not aim to mend:
'Yet bards like theſe aſpir'd to laſting praiſe,
'And proudly hop'd to pimp in future days.
'Their cauſe was general, their ſupports were ſtrong;
'Their ſlaves were willing, and their reign was long;
'Till Shame regain'd the poſt that Senſe betray'd,
'And Virtue call'd Oblivion to her aid.
'Then cruſh'd by rules, and weaken'd as refin'd,
'For years the pow'r of tragedy declin'd;
'From bard to bard the frigid caution crept,
'Till declamation roar'd, whilſt paſſion ſlept;
'Yet ſtill did Virtue deign the ſtage to tread,
'Philoſophy remain'd, though Nature fled.
'But forc'd, at length, her ancient reign to quit,
'She ſaw great Fauſtus lay the ghoſt of wit;
'Exulting Folly hail'd the joyous day,
'And Pantomime and Song confirm'd her ſway.
'But who the coming changes can preſage,
'And mark the future periods of the ſtage?
'Perhaps, if ſkill could diſtant times explore,
'New Behns, new Durfeys, yet remain in ſtore;
'Perhaps, where Lear has rav'd, and Hamlet dy'd,
'On flying cars new ſorcerers may ride;
'Perhaps (for who can gueſs the effects of chance?)
'Here Hunt may box, or Mahomet * may dance.
'Hard is his lot that here by fortune plac'd,
'Muſt watch the wild viciſſitudes of Taſte;
'With every meteor of Caprice muſt play,
'And chace the new-blown bubbles of the day.

* A rope-dancer, a real or pretended Turk, that exhibited on Covent-garden ſtage a winter or two before.

'Ah! let not cenſure term our fate our choice,
'The ſtage but echoes back the public voice;
'The drama's laws the drama's patrons give,
'For we that live to pleaſe, muſt pleaſe to live.
'Then prompt no more the follies you decry,
'As tyrants doom their tools of guilt to die;
''Tis your's, this night, to bid the reign commence
'Of reſcu'd Nature, and reviving Senſe;
'To chace the charms of ſound, the pomp of ſhow,
'For uſeful mirth and ſalutary woe;
'Bid ſcenic Virtue form the riſing age,
'And Truth diffuſe her radiance from the ſtage.'

This maſterly and ſpirited addreſs failed in a great meaſure of its effect; the town, it is true, ſubmitted to the revival of Shakeſpeare's plays, recommended as they were by the exquiſite acting of Mr. Garrick; but in a few winters they diſcovered an impatience for pantomimes and ballad-farces, and were indulged with them. From that time Mr. Garrick gave up the hope of correcting the public taſte, and at length became ſo indifferent about it, that he once told me, that if the town required him to exhibit the 'Pilgrim's Progreſs' in a drama, he would do it.

Two years after, the management of Drury-lane theatre being in the hands of his friends, Johnſon bethought himſelf of bringing his tragedy on the ſtage. It was not only a juvenile compoſition, but was written before he had become converſant with Shakeſpeare, in ed : he had ever read Othello, and having f more than ten years, lain by him, in which nent had been growing to maturity, he ſet

ſet himſelf to reviſe and poliſh it, taking to his aſſiſtance Mr. Garrick, whoſe experience of ſtage decorum, and the mechanic operation of incidents and ſentiments on the judgment and paſſions of an audience, was, by long attention, become very great. With theſe advantages and all thoſe others which Mr. Garrick's zeal prompted him to ſupply, ſuch as magnificent ſcenery, ſplendid and well-choſen dreſſes, and a diſtribution of the principal parts, himſelf taking a very active one, to the beſt performers then living, namely, Barry, Mrs. Cibber and Mrs. Pritchard; it was, in the winter of the year 1749, preſented to a polite, a numerous, and an unprejudiced audience. Never was there ſuch a diſplay of eaſtern magnificence as this ſpectacle exhibited, nor ever were fine moral ſentiments more ſtrongly enforced by correct and energetic utterance and juſt action, than in the repreſentation of this laboured tragedy; but the diction of the piece was cold and philoſophical; it came from the head of the writer, and reached not the hearts of the hearers. The conſequence whereof was, that it was received with cold applauſe, and having reached to a ninth night's performance, was laid by. During the repreſentation Johnſon was behind the ſcenes, and thinking his character of an author required upon the occaſion ſome diſtinction of dreſs, he appeared in a gold-laced waiſtcoat.

The truth of the above aſſertion, as to the language of this tragedy, is to be judged of by the peruſal of it; for, notwithſtanding its ill ſucceſs as a dramatic repreſentation, Johnſon found his account in giving it to the world as a poem. Of the fable, the cha-

tempting one. Purſuing the track of his author, he expatiates on the miſeries that await empire, grandeur, wealth, and power, and the diſappointments that fruſtrate the hopes of ambition, learning, eloquence, and beauty; in all which inſtances he has been able to point out examples the moſt ſtriking and appoſite.

The poem concludes with an anſwer to an enquiry that muſt neceſſarily reſult from the peruſal of the foregoing part of it, viz. what are the conſolations that human life affords? or, in other words, in whom or on what is a virtuous man to reſt his hope? the reſolution of this queſtion is contained in the following lines, which for dignity of ſentiment, for pious inſtruction, and purity of ſtyle, are hardly to be equalled by any in our language.

'Where then ſhall hope and fear their objects find?
'Muſt dull ſuſpenſe corrupt the ſtagnant mind?
'Muſt helpleſs man, in ignorance ſedate,
'Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?
'Muſt no diſlike alarm, no wiſhes riſe,
'No cries invoke the genius of the ſkies?
'Enquirer, ceaſe, petitions yet remain,
'Which Heav'n may hear, nor deem religion vain.
'Still raiſe for good the ſupplicating voice,
'But leave to Heav'n the meaſure and the choice.
'S[illegible]in his p[illegible]r, whoſe eyes diſcern afar
'T[illegible]ret [illegible]buſh of a ſpecious pray'r;
'[illegible], in his deciſions reſt,
[illegible]er he gives, he gives the beſt.
[illegible] of f[illegible]ed preſence fires,
[illegible]t ſkies aſpires,

'Pour

'Pour forth thy fervours for a healthful mind,
'Obedient paſſions, and a will reſign'd;
'For love, which ſcarce collective man can fill;
'For patience, ſov'reign o'er tranſmuted ill;
'For faith, that panting for a happier ſeat,
'Counts death kind nature's ſignal of retreat.
'Theſe goods for man, the laws of Heav'n ordain;
'Theſe goods he grants, who grants the pow'r to gain;
'With theſe celeſtial wiſdom calms the mind,
'And makes the happineſs ſhe does not find.'

In the following year, it having been diſcovered, that a grand-daughter of Milton was living, Mr. Garrick was prevailed on to permit the repreſentation of the Maſque of Comus at his theatre, for her benefit. Upon this occaſion, Johnſon, forgetting the enmity which he had always borne towards Milton, wrote a prologue, wherein he calls the attention of the audience to his memory, and without imputing to his deſcendant any other merit than induſtrious poverty and conjugal fidelity, implores them to crown deſert beyond the grave.

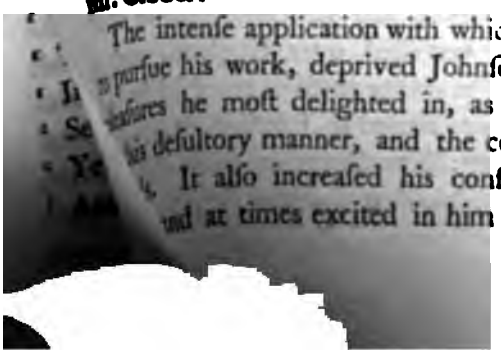
Johnſon's beneficence was of the moſt diffuſive kind: Diſtreſs was the general motive, and merit, whether in the object or any to whom he claimed relation, the particular incentive to it. There was living at this time, a man of the name of De Groot, a painter by profeſſion, and no contemptible artiſt, who, after having travelled over England, and at low prices painted as many perſons as could be perſuaded to ſit to him, ſettled in London, and became reduced to poverty: him Oldys, or ſome one other of his friends, introduced to Johnſon, who found out

by

by his converſation that he was a deſcendant of Grotius; and thereupon exerting his intereſt in his behalf, he procured for him an admiſſion into the Charterhouſe, in which comfortable retreat he died.

Johnſon was all this while working at the dictionary, having to aſſiſt him a number of young perſons whoſe employment it was to diſtribute the articles with ſufficient ſpaces for the definitions, which it is eaſy to diſcern are of his own compoſition.

Of theſe his aſſiſtants, ſome were young men of parts, others mere drudges. Among the former was one of the name of Shiells, a Scotchman, the author of a poem in blank verſe, intitled 'Beauty,' and alſo of a collection of the lives of the poets, in four volumes, which, for a gratuity of ten guineas, Theophilus Cibber ſuffered to be printed with his name, a book of no authority other than what it derives from Winſtanley, Langbaine, and Jacob, and in other reſpects of little worth; but concerning which it is fit that the following fact ſhould be made known: Cibber at the time of making this bargain, was under confinement for debt in the king's-bench priſon, and with a view to deceive the public into a belief that the book was of his father's writing, it was concerted between the negotiators of it and himſelf to ſuppreſs his chriſtian name, and that it ſhould be printed as a work of Mr. Cibber.



The intenſe application with which he was obliged to purſue his work, deprived Johnſon of many of the pleaſures he moſt delighted in, as namely, reading in a deſultory manner, and the converſation of his friends. It alſo increaſed his conſtitutional melancholy, and at times excited in him a loathing of that employment

nployment to which he could not but look upon imſelf as doomed by his neceſſities. The ſum for hich he had ſtipulated with the bookſellers, was y the terms of the agreement, to be paid as the ork went on, and was indeed his only ſupport. Be- ig thus compelled to ſpend every day like the paſt, he ooked on himſelf as in a ſtate of mental bondage, and eflecting that while he was thus employed, his beſt culties lay dormant, was unwillingly willing to ork.

And here we cannot but reflect on that inertneſs nd laxity of mind which the neglect of order and egularity in living, and the obſervance of ſtated ours, in ſhort, the waſte of time, is apt to lead men o: this was the ſource of Johnſon's miſery through- ut his life; all he did was by fits and ſtarts, and he ad no genuine impulſe to action, either corporal r mental. That the compilation of ſuch a work as e was engaged in, was neceſſarily productive of that nguor, which, in the proſecution of it he manifeſted, s by no means clear: all employments, all occupa- ions whatever, are intrinſically indifferent, and excite either pain nor pleaſure, but as the mind is diſ- oſed towards them. Fame, mere poſthumous fame as engaged men to ſimilar undertakings, and they ave purſued them with zeal and even delight. Canne, he editor of a bible printed in 1664, ſpent many years n collecting parallel paſſages in the Old and New Teſtament, to ſuch a number as to croud the margin of he book, and in the preface thereto he declares, that t was the moſt delightful employment of his life; nd what but a real pleaſure in that kind of labour, and

and the conſideration of its benefit to mankind, could be the inducement with ſuch a man as Hoffman to compile a lexicon more than twice as voluminous as that of Johnſon?

And, to ſpeak more at large, viz. of men who have benefited the world by their literary labours, avowing as their motive the deſire of gain, we find not all infected with that diſeaſe, which as it affected Johnſon, may almoſt be ſaid to have converted all his mental nutriment to poiſon: on the contrary, there have been many who mixed with the world, and by a good uſe of their time, were capable of great application and enjoying the benefits of ſociety; and of theſe I ſhall mention three perſons, his contemporaries, men of very different characters from each other; all authors by profeſſion, and of great eminence in literature.

The firſt was the reverend Dr. Thomas Birch, a divine of the church of England, but originally a quaker. In his youth he was paſſionately fond of reading, and being indulged in it by his father, became ſucceſſively uſher to two ſchools in which the ſons of quakers were educated. He married at the age of twenty-three; but in leſs than a year became a widower. Having had the happineſs of a recommendation to Sir Philip Yorke, then attorney-general, and being honoured with his favour and patronage, he, in 1730, entered into holy orders, and was preſented to a rectory and alſo to a vicarage in Glouceſterſhire. Soon after this, in conjunction with the reverend Mr. Bernard, the well-known Mr. John Lockman, and Mr. George Sale the tranſlator of the Koran,

ran, he compiled a general biographical dictionary
ten volumes in folio, including therein a tranſlation
that of Bayle, and collected and publiſhed Thur-
's ſtate papers, in ſeven folio volumes, and was
editor of lord Bacon's, Mr. Boyle's, and arch-
hop Tillotſon's works, as alſo of the proſe writings
Milton, and the miſcellaneous pieces of Sir Walter
leigh, and the works of Mrs. Elizabeth Cock-
rn. He was firſt a fellow of and afterwards ſecre-
y to the royal ſociety, and wrote a hiſtory thereof.
1753, the Mariſchal college at Aberdeen confer-
on him the degree of doctor in divinity, and,
year after, he received the ſame honour from
hbiſhop Herring. The above is but a partial
umeration of his publications, for he wrote the
es of Henry prince of Wales, of Bacon, Boyle,
ilton, and Tillotſon, and other perſons, and many
cts not here noticed. In the midſt of all this em-
yment, Dr. Birch was to be ſeen, at home, at the
yal and Antiquarian ſocieties, at Sion college, at the
ademy of ancient muſic, which had long ſubſiſted at
e Crown and Anchor in the Strand, at Tom's
ffee-houſe in Devereux court; in ſhort, in all
aces where a clergyman might with propriety ap-
ar. Nor was this all; he found time for the exer-
e of walking, before many people were ſtirring. I
ve been with him at nine in a winter's morning, and
ve found him juſt returned from an excurſion of ſome
les *. He held a converſation on Sunday even-
ings

* I heard him once relate, that he had the curioſity to meaſure
circuit of London by a perambulation thereof: the account he
re was to this effect: He ſet out from his houſe in the Strand
towards

ings with his friends, who were men of the firſt eminence for learning and intelligence, at his houſe in Norfolk ſtreet in the Strand †, in which all, particu-

towards Chelſea, and having reached the bridge beyond the waterworks, he directed his courſe to Marybone, from whence purſuing an eaſtern direction, he ſkirted the town, and croſſed the Iſlington road at the Angel. There was at that time no city-road, but paſſing through Hoxton, he got to Shoreditch, thence to Bethnal green, and from thence to Stepney, where he recruited his ſpirits with a glaſs of brandy. From Stepney he paſſed on to Limehouſe, and took into his rout the adjacent hamlet of Poplar, when he became ſenſible that to complete his deſign he muſt take in Southwark: this put him to a ſtand; but he ſoon determined on his courſe, for taking a boat he landed at the red houſe at Deptford, and made his way to Say's court, where the great wet-dock is, and keeping the houſes along Rotherhithe to the right, he got to Bermondſey, thence by the ſouth end of Kent-ſtreet to Newington, and over St. George's fields to Lambeth, and croſſing over to Millbank continued his way to Charing croſs, and along the Strand to Norfolk ſtreet, from whence he had ſet out. The whole of this excurſion took him up from nine in the morning to three in the afternoon, and, according to his rate of walking, he computed the circuit of London at above twenty miles. With the buildings erected ſince, it may be ſuppoſed to have increaſed five miles, and if ſo, the preſent circumference of this great metropolis is about half that of ancient Rome.

† Formerly the habitation of the famous William Penn the quaker, of whom it is well known that his circumſtances at a certain period of his life were ſo involved, that it was not ſafe for him to go abroad. He choſe this houſe, it being at the ſouth weſt corner of the ſtreet, as one from whence he might, upon occaſion, ſlip out by water. In the entrance to it he had a peeping-hole, through which he could ſee any perſons that came to him. One of theſe who had ſent in his name, having been made to wait more than a reaſonable time, knocked for the ſervant, whom he aſked, 'Will not thy maſter ſee me?' 'Friend,' anſwered the ſervant, 'he has ſeen thee, but he does not like thee.' The fact was, that Penn had from his ſtation taken a view of him, and found him to be a creditor.

larly

larly the library, was neat and elegant, without litter or diſorder.

The mental endowments of Dr. Birch were ſingular; he had a great eagerneſs after knowledge, and a memory very retentive of facts; but his learning, properly ſo called, bore no proportion to his reading; for he was in truth neither a mathematician, a natural philoſopher, a claſſical ſcholar, nor a divine; but, in a ſmall degree, all, and though lively in converſation, he was but a dull writer. Johnſon was uſed to ſpeak of him in this manner: 'Tom is a lively rogue; he re-'members a great deal, and can tell many pleaſant 'ſtories; but a pen is to Tom a torpedo, the touch 'of it benumbs his hand and his brain: Tom can 'talk; but he is no writer.'——And indeed whoever peruſes his writings will be much of the ſame opinion: his life of Tillotſon is a mere detail of unconnected facts, without the intermixture of ſentiment or diſquiſition; and of the ſtyle, let this citation ſerve as a ſpecimen. Speaking of Wilkins, he makes a tranſition to Tillotſon, whom he characterizes in theſe words, and meaner he could not have found: 'He 'went into all the very beſt things that were in that 'great man; but ſo as he improved every one of 'them.'

In the midſt of all his labours and purſuits, Dr. Birch preſerved an even temper of mind, and a great chearfulneſs of ſpirits. Ever deſirous to learn, and willing to communicate, he was uniformly affable, courteous, and diſpoſed to converſation. His life was ſpent without reproach, but terminated by an unhappy accident, a fall from his horſe on the Hampſtead road, on the 9th day of January, 1766. His

preferments in the church, though ſucceſſively numerous, were ſmall and never reached to dignities: the laſt of them were the rectories of St. Margaret Pattens, London, and of Depden in Eſſex.

Dr. John Campbell was an eminent writer, and a labourer in a voluminous work undertaken at the expence and riſque of the bookſellers, the Univerſal Hiſtory. Beſides many other books, he wrote the lives of the Engliſh admirals in four octavo volumes. He had a conſiderable hand in the Biographia Britannica, and was the author of a valuable work in two quarto volumes intitled, 'A political ſurvey of 'Britain;' being a ſeries of reflections on the ſituation, lands, inhabitants, revenues, colonies, and commerce of this iſland; intended to ſhew that they have not as yet approached to near the ſummit of improvement, but that it will afford employment for many ages, before they puſh to their utmoſt extent the natural advantages of Great Britain. The reputation of this work extended to the moſt remote parts of Europe, and induced the empreſs of Ruſſia in the year 1774, to honour the author with a preſent of her picture. By the exerciſe of his pen alone, and a good uſe of his time, he was for many years enabled to ſupport himſelf, and enjoy the comforts of domeſtic life in the ſociety of an excellent wife and a numerous offspring. In 1765, he was appointed his majeſty's agent for the province of Georgia in North America, and was thereby raiſed to a ſtate of comparative affluence. His reſidence for ſome years before his death, was the large new-built houſe ſituate at the north-weſt corner of Queen ſquare, Bloomſbury, whither, particularly on Sunday evening, great numbers of perſons of the

firſt

firſt eminence for ſcience and literature were accuſtomed to reſort for the enjoyment of converſation. He died in 1775, having nearly completed the ſixty-eighth year of his age, leaving behind him the character of a learned, an ingenious, and a pious man.

Dr. John Hill was originally an apothecary and a ſtudent in botany, in which he was encouraged by the late duke of Richmond, and lord Petre; but finding that an unprofitable purſuit, he made two or three attempts as a writer for the ſtage: a failure in them drove him back to his former ſtudy, in the courſe whereof he got introduced to Mr. Martin Folkes and Mr. Henry Baker, leading members of the royal ſociety, who finding him a young man of parts and well ſkilled in natural hiſtory, recommended him among their friends. His firſt publication was a tranſlation from the Greek of a ſmall tract, Theophraſtus on gems, which being printed by ſubſcription, produced him ſome money, and ſuch a reputation as induced the bookſellers to engage him in writing a general natural hiſtory in two volumes in folio, and ſoon after, a ſupplement to Chambers's dictionary. He had received no academical education; but his ambition prompting him to be a graduate, he obtained, from one of thoſe univerſities which would ſcarce refuſe a degree to an apothecary's horſe, a diploma for that of doctor of phyſic. After this, he engaged in a variety of works, the greater part whereof were mere compilations, which he ſent forth with incredible expedition; and though his character was never in ſuch eſtimation with the bookſellers as to entitle him to an extraordinary price for his writings, he has been

known by ſuch works as thoſe above-mentioned, by novels, pamphlets, and a periodical paper called 'The 'Inſpector,' the labour of his own head and hand, to have earned, in one year, the ſum of 1500l. He was vain, conceited, and in his writings diſpoſed to ſatire and licentious ſcurrility, which he indulged without any regard to truth, and thereby became engaged in frequent diſputes and quarrels that always terminated in his own diſgrace. For ſome abuſe in his Inſpector, of a gentleman of the name of Brown, he had his head broke in the circus of Ranelagh gardens. He inſulted Woodward the player in the face of an audience, and engaged with him in a pamphlet-war, in which he was foiled *. He attacked the royal ſociety in a review of their tranſactions, and abuſed his old friends Mr. Folkes and Mr. Baker for oppoſing, on account of his infamous character, his admiſſion among them as a member. In the midſt of all this employment, he found time and means to drive about the town in his chariot, and to appear abroad and at all public places, at Batſon's coffee-houſe, at maſquerades, and at the opera and playhouſes, ſplendidly dreſſed, and as often as he could, in the front row of

* It was ſaid of Hill, that when he met, in any botanic garden, with a curious plant that was portable, he would convey it away, and that he was once detected in an attempt of that kind. Woodward, in a pamphlet written againſt him, alluded to this fact by prefixing to it, as a motto, this appoſite citation from Shakeſpeare's Romeo and Juliet:

'I do remember an apothecary
'— — — — — —
'Culling of ſimples.'

the boxes. Towards the end of his life, his reputation as an author was ſo ſunk by the ſlovenlineſs of his compilations, and his diſregard to truth in what he related, that he was forced to betake himſelf to the vending a few ſimple medicines, namely, eſſence of water-dock, tincture of Valerian, balſam of honey, and elixir of Bardana, and by pamphlets aſcribing to them greater virtues than they had, impoſed on the credulity of the public, and thereby got, though not an honeſt, a competent livelihood.

Two years before his death, he had, as he gave out, received from the king of Sweden, the inveſtiture of knight of one of the orders of that kingdom, in return for a preſent to that monarch of his 'Vegetable ſyſtem' in twenty-ſix folio volumes. With all his folly and malignity, he entertained a ſenſe of religion, and wrote a vindication of God and nature againſt the ſhallow philoſophy of lord Bolingbroke.

Beſides theſe, there was another claſs of authors who lived by writing, that require to be noticed: the former were, in fact, penſioners of the booksellers: theſe vended their compoſitions when completed, to thoſe of that trade who would give moſt for them. They were moſtly books of mere entertainment that were the ſubjects of this kind of commerce, and were and ſtill are diſtinguiſhed by the corrupt appellation of novels and romances. Though fictitious, and the work of mere invention, they pretended to probability, to be founded in nature, and to delineate ſocial manners. The firſt publication of the kind was the 'Pamela' of Mr.

Richardſon *, which being read with great eagerneſs by the young people of the time, and recommended from the pulpit, begat ſuch a craving for more of the ſame ſtuff, as tempted ſome men whoſe neceſſities and abilities were nearly commenſurate, to try their ſucceſs in this new kind of writing.

At the head of theſe we muſt, for many reaſons, place Henry Fielding, one of the moſt motley of literary characters. This man was, in his early life, a writer of comedies and farces, very few of which are now remembered; after that, a practiſing barriſter with ſcarce any buſineſs; then an anti-miniſterial writer, and quickly after, a creature of the duke of Newcaſtle, who gave him a nominal qualification of 100l. a year, and ſet him up as a trading-juſtice, in which diſreputable ſtation he died. He was the author of a romance, intitled 'The hiſtory of Joſeph Andrews,' and of another, 'The Foundling, or the 'hiſtory of Tom Jones,' a book ſeemingly intended to ſap the foundation of that morality which it is the duty of parents and all public inſtructors to inculcate in the minds of young people, by teaching that virtue upon principle is impoſture, that generous qualities alone conſtitute true worth, and that a young

* Pamela is the name of a lady, one of the principal characters in Sir Philip Sidney's 'Arcadia,' and is thus accented Pamēla. So Mr. Pope,

'The Gods, to curſe Pamēla with her pray'rs,
'Gave the gilt coach and dappled Flanders mares.'

Richardſon, whether through ignorance or deſign, and alſo all his people, conſtantly pronounced it Pamēla.

man

the former Engliſh verſions, none of which do, as it is ſaid, convey the humour of the original. It might ſeem that Jarvis's tranſlation was one impediment to ſuch an undertaking; but that, though it gives the ſenſe of the author, was performed by perſons whoſe ſkill in the language was not great. The fact is, that Jarvis laboured at it many years, but could make but little progreſs, for being a painter by profeſſion, he had not been accuſtomed to write, and had no ſtyle. Mr. Tonſon the bookſeller ſeeing this, ſuggeſted the thought of employing Mr. Broughton, the reader at the Temple church, the author and editor of ſundry publications, who, as I have been informed by a friend of Tonſon, ſat himſelf down to ſtudy the Spaniſh language, and, in a few months, acquired, as was pretended, ſufficient knowledge thereof, to give to the world a tranſlation of Don Quixote in the true ſpirit of the original, and to which is prefixed the name of Jarvis.

I might here ſpeak of Richardſon as a writer of fictitious hiſtory, but that he wrote for amuſement, and that the profits of his writings, though very great, were accidental. He was a man of no learning nor reading, but had a vivid imagination, which he let looſe in reflections on human life and manners, till it became ſo diſtended with ſentiments, that for his own eaſe, he was neceſſitated to vent them on paper. In the original plan of his 'Clariſſa,' it was his deſign, as his bookſeller once told me, to continue it to the extent of twenty-four volumes, but he was, with difficulty, prevailed on to compriſe it in ſix.

The character of Richardſon as a writer is to this day , otherwiſe than by the avidity with which his

s publications are by ſome readers peruſed, and the
le of numerous editions. He has been celebrated
a writer ſimilar in genius to Shakeſpeare, as being
quainted with the inmoſt receſſes of the human
art, and having an abſolute command of the paſſions,
as to be able to affect his readers as himſelf is affected,
d to intereſt them in the ſucceſſes and diſappoint-
ents, the joys and ſorrows of his characters. Others
ere are who think that neither his 'Pamela,' his 'Cla-
ſa,' nor his 'Sir Charles Grandiſon' are to be num-
red among the books of rational and inſtructive
uſement, that they are not to be compared to the
vels of Cervantes, or the more ſimple and chaſte
rrations of Le Sage, that they are not juſt repre-
ntations of human manners, that in them the turpi-
le of vice is not ſtrongly enough marked, and that
: allurements to it are repreſented in the gayeſt
lours; that the texture of all his writings is flimſy
l thin, and his ſtyle mean and feeble; that they
ve a general tendency to inflame the paſſions of
ung people, and to teach them that which they need
t to be taught; and that though they pretend to a
ral, it often turns out a bad one. The cant terms
him and his admirers are ſentiment and ſenti-
ntality.

Johnſon was inclined, as being perſonally acquaint-
with Richardſon, to favour the former opinion of
writings, but he ſeemed not firm in it, and could
any time be talked into a diſapprobation of all
itious relations, of which he would frequently ſay
y took no hold of the mind.

I am tired of adducing inſtances of men who
ed by the profeſſion of writing and thought it

an

an eligible one, and ſhould now proceed to relate the ſubſequent events of Dr. Johnſon's life, and mark the ſtate of his mind at different periods, but that I find myſelf detained by a character, which, as it were, obtrudes itſelf to view, and is of importance enough to claim notice.

Laurence Sterne, a clergyman and a dignitary of the cathedral church of York, was remarkable for a wild and eccentric genius, reſembling in many reſpects that of Rabelais. The work that made him firſt known as a writer, was, 'The life and opinions 'of Triſtram Shandy,' a whimſical rhapſody, but abounding in wit and humour of the licentious kind. He too was a ſentimentaliſt, and wrote ſentimental journies and ſentimental letters in abundance, by which both he and the bookſellers got conſiderably. Of the writers of this claſs or ſect it may be obſerved, that being in general men of looſe principles, bad œconomiſts, living without foreſight, it is their endeavour to commute for their failings by profeſſions of greater love to mankind, more tender affections and finer feelings than they will allow men of more regular lives, whom they deem formaliſts, to poſſeſs. Their generous notions ſuperſede all obligation: they are a law to themſelves, and having good hearts and abounding in the milk of human kindneſs, are above thoſe conſiderations that bind men that rule of conduct which is founded in a nſe of duty. Of this new ſchool of morality, I ding, Rouſſeau, and Sterne are the principal hers, and great is the miſchief they have done ir documents.

To

To theſe I might add the names of ſundry perſons of the ſame occupation, the authors of the Univerſal hiſtory in forty folio volumes, but that only a few of them are at this diſtance of time known: thoſe are Pſalmanaazar, George Sale, the above Dr. Campbell, and Mr. George Shelvocke, who, of a boy bred to the ſea, became a man of learning, a travelling tutor, and at length attained to the lucrative employment of ſecretary of the poſt-office. Of theſe men it may be ſaid that they were miners in literature, they worked, though not in darkneſs, under ground; their motive was gain; their labour ſilent and inceſſant.

From the above enumeration of characters and particulars it may be inferred, that Johnſon's indolence and melancholy were diſeaſes of his mind, and not the neceſſary conſequence of the profeſſion he had taken up, that he ſaw human life through a falſe medium, and that he voluntarily renounced many comforts, gratifications, and even pleaſures, obviouſly in his power. One effort however he made to ſoothe his mind and palliate the fatigue of his labours, which I here relate.

The great delight of his life was converſation and mental intercourſe. That he might be able to indulge himſelf in this, he had, in the winter of 1749, formed a club that met weekly at the King's head, a famous beef-ſteak houſe, in Ivy lane near St. Paul's, every Tueſday evening. Thither he conſtantly reſorted, and, with a diſpoſition to pleaſe and be pleaſed, would paſs thoſe hours in a free and unreſtrained interchange of ſentiments, which otherwiſe had been

ſpent

ſpent at home in painful reflection. The perſons who compoſed this little ſociety were nine in number: I will mention their names, and, as well as I am able, give a ſlight ſketch of the ſeveral characters of ſuch of them as cannot now be affected by either praiſe or blame: they were, the reverend Dr. Salter, father of the late maſter of the Charterhouſe,—Dr. Hawkeſworth,—Mr. Ryland a merchant, a relation of his,—Mr. John Payne then a bookſeller, but now or very lately chief accountant of the bank,—Mr. Samuel Dyer a learned young man intended for the diſſenting miniſtry,—Dr. William M'Ghie a Scots phyſician,—Dr. Edmund Barker, a young phyſician,—Dr. Richard Bathurſt alſo a young phyſician, and myſelf.

Dr. Samuel Salter was a Cambridge divine, whom ſome diſagreement between him and his children had driven from his abode at Norwich, at the age of ſeventy, to ſettle in London. Being thus far advanced in years, he could carry his recollection back to the time when Dr. Samuel Clarke was yet a member of that univerſity, and would frequently entertain us with particulars reſpecting him. He was a dignitary of the church, I think archdeacon of Norfolk, a man of general reading, but no deep ſcholar: he was well-bred, courteous, and affable, and enlivened converſation by the relation of a variety of curious facts, of which his memory was the only regiſter.

Dr. Hawkeſworth is a character well known in the literary world: I ſhall not attempt a delineation of it, as I find in the biographic dictionary an article for him in the words following:

'John Hawkeſworth, an Engliſh writer of a very

'ſoft

oft and pleaſing caſt, was born about the year 1719, though his epitaph, as we find it in the Gentleman's Magazine," for Auguſt 1781, makes him to have been born in 1715. He was brought up to a mechanical profeſſion, that of a watchmaker, as is ſuppoſed*. He was of the ſect of preſbyterians, and a member of the celebrated Tom Bradbury's meeting, from which he was expelled for ſome irregularities. He afterwards devoted himſelf to literature, and became an author of conſiderable eminence. In the early part of his life, his circumſtances were rather confined. He reſided ome time at Bromley in Kent, where his wife kept boarding-ſchool. He afterwards became known o a lady, who had great property and intereſt in the Eaſt-India company; and, through her means, was choſen a director of that body. As an author, his 'Adventurer' is his capital work; the merits of which, if we miſtake not, procured him the degree of L. L. D. from Herring, archbiſhop of Canterbury. When the deſign of compiling a narrative of the diſcoveries in the South ſeas was on foot, he was recommended as a proper perſon to be employed on the occaſion; but, in truth, he was not a proper perſon, nor did the performance anſwer expectation. Works of taſte and elegance, where imagination and the paſſions were to be affected, were his province; not works of dry, cold, accurate narrative. However, he executed his taſk, and is ſaid

* This is a miſtake. He had been taught no art but that of writing, and was a hired clerk to one Harwood an attorney in Gro-' alley, in the Poultry.

' to

'to have received for it the enormous ſum of 6000l.
'He died in 1773, ſome ſay of high living, others,
'of chagrin from the ill reception of his 'Narrative:'
'for he was a man of the keeneſt ſenſibility, and ob-
'noxious to all the evils of ſuch irritable natures.'

Mr. Samuel Dyer was the ſon of a jeweller of eminence in the city, who, by his ingenuity and induſtry had acquired a competent fortune. He, as alſo his wife, were diſſenters, perſons very religiouſly diſpoſed, members of Chandler's congregation in the Old Jewry, and this their youngeſt ſon was educated by profeſſor Ward, at the time when he kept a private ſchool in one of the alleys near Moorfields; and from thence, being intended by his father for the diſſenting miniſtry, was removed to Dr. Doddridge's academy at Northampton. After having finiſhed his ſtudies in this ſeminary, he was removed to Glaſgow, where, under Dr. Hutcheſon, he was inſtructed in the writings of the Greek moraliſts, and went through ſeveral courſes of ethics and metaphyſics. To complete this plan of a learned education, the elder Mr. Dyer, by the advice of Dr. Chandler, ſent his ſon to Leyden, with a view to his improvement in the Hebrew literature under Schultens, a celebrated profeſſor in that univerſity. After two years' ſtay abroad, Mr. Dyer returned, eminently qualified for the exerciſe of that profeſſion to which his ſtudies had been directed, and great were the hopes of his friends that he would become one of its ornaments. To ſpeak of his attainments in knowledge, he was an excellent claſſical ſcholar, a great mathematician and natural philoſopher, well verſed in the Hebrew, and

maſter

tracts of his writing, ſhould be tranſlated into Latin, and printed the ſecond year after his death, and five hundred of each given away, and this bequeſt to be repeated when that number was diſpoſed of.

This part of his will had remained unexecuted from about the year 1715, and Dr. Chandler being a truſtee for the performance of it, and empowered to offer an equivalent to any one that he ſhould think equal to the undertaking, propoſed it to Mr. Dyer, and he accepted it; but ſmall was his progreſs in it before it began to grow irkſome, and the completing of the tranſlation was referred to ſome one leſs averſe to labour than himſelf.

Having thus got rid of an employment to which no perſuaſions of his friends nor proſpects of future advantage could reconcile him, he became, as it were, emancipated from the bondage of puritanical forms and modes of living. Mr. Dyer commenced a man of the world, and with a ſober and temperate deliberation reſolved on a participation of its pleaſures and enjoyments. His company, though he was rather a ſilent than a talkative man, was courted by many, and he had frequent invitations to dinners, to ſuppers, and card-parties. By theſe means he became inſenſibly a votary of pleaſure, and to juſtify this choice, had reaſoned himſelf into a perſuaſion that, not only in the moral government of the world but in human manners, through all the changes and fluctuations of faſhion and caprice, whatever is, is right. With this and other opinions equally tending to corrupt his mind, it muſt be ſuppoſed that he began to grow indifferent to the ſtrict practice of religion, and the

the event ſhewed itſelf in a gradual declination from the exerciſes of it, and his eaſy compliance with invitations to Sunday evening parties, in which mere converſation was not the chief amuſement.

In his diſcourſe he was exceedingly cloſe and reſerved: it was nevertheleſs to be remarked of him, that he looked upon the reſtraints on a life of pleaſure with an unapproving eye. He had an exquiſite palate, and had improved his reliſh for meats and drinks up to ſuch a degree of refinement, that I once found him in a fit of melancholy occaſioned by a diſcovery that he had loſt his taſte for olives!

He was a man of deep reflection, and very able in converſation on moſt topics; and after he had determined on his courſe of life, which was, to be of no profeſſion, but to become a gentleman at large, living much at the houſes of his friends, he ſeemed to adopt the ſentiments of a man of faſhion. In a viſit that he made with a friend to France, he met with a book with the title of 'Les Mœurs' with which he was greatly delighted, and at length became ſo enamoured of it, and that free and liberal ſpirit which it manifeſts, that, after a conflict with his natural indolence, in which he came off the victor, he formed a reſolution to tranſlate it into Engliſh; but after a ſmall progreſs in the work, the enemy rallied, and defeated him. Cave was his printer, and had worked off only a few ſheets when Mr. Dyer's ſtock of copy was exhauſted, and his bookſeller found himſelf reduced to the neceſſity of getting the tranſlation finiſhed by another hand, which he did, employing for the purpoſe a Mr. Collyer, the

author of 'Letters from Felicia to Charlotte,' and other innocent and ſome uſeful publications. The tranſlation was completed, but upon its being ſent abroad, met with a rival one that involved Cave, who was intereſted in the ſucceſs of the book, in an advertiſement-war, which he was left to conduct as he could.

Few who are acquainted with this book, will blame or wonder at Mr. Dyer's partiality for it. It is a work replete with good ſenſe, ſetting forth the excellence and the reaſonableneſs of moral virtue, in language ſo elegant and lively, and with ſuch forcible perſuaſion, as cannot but win on a mind open to inſtruction.

The earl of Cheſterfield's voluminous exhortations to his ſon have been, by ſome, eſteemed a ſyſtem of education, a ſyſtem which ſinks into nothing when compared, either in its foundation or tendency, to that contained in this conciſe code of ethics. His lordſhip teaches the baſer arts as means to that important end, ſucceſs in the world; this writer, that the good opinion of mankind is never to be purchaſed by deviating from the rule of right, and that we ſeek in vain for happineſs, if we do not exert ourſelves in the diſcharge of our ſeveral duties. Principles ſuch as theſe, the diſciples of the Graces are not likely to reliſh; but it is nevertheleſs true, that the unaſſuming, the benevolent author of 'Les 'Mœurs' underſtood the art of forming the character of a really fine gentleman, much better than he who taught that infamy was the road to honour. In ſhort, this is a work, in praiſe of which there is no danger of being too laviſh, for thoſe muſt be wiſe indeed

by Mr. Samuel Sharp, the ſurgeon, to engage in: this was a reviſion of the old tranſlation of Plutarch's lives by ſeveral hands. He undertook, and, with heavy complaints of the labour of his taſk, completed it, and had for his reward from Mr. Draper the partner of Mr. Tonſon, whom Mr. Sharp had ſolicited to find ſome employment for him, the ſum of two hundred pounds.

While he was a member of the club, Johnſon ſuſpected that his religious principles, for which at firſt he honoured him, were giving way, and it was whiſpered to me by one who ſeemed pleaſed that he was in the ſecret, that Mr. Dyer's religion was that of Socrates. What farther advances he made in Theiſm I could not learn, nor will I venture to aſſert, that which ſome expreſſions that I have heard drop from him led me to fear, viz. that he denied, in the philoſophical ſenſe of the term, the freedom of the human will, and ſettled in materialiſm and its conſequent tenets.

As all his determinations were ſlow and deliberate, and ſeemed to be the reſult of reaſon and reflection, the change in his principles and conduct here noted was gradual. Of this the firſt ſymptoms were an imbecillity to reſiſt any temptation abroad on a Sunday evening, that ſhould eaſe him of the trouble of ſuch exerciſes as he had been accuſtomed to perform in the family of his mother, and an eager curioſity in the peruſal of books not merely of entertainment, but of ſuch, as together with a knowledge of the world, furniſhed his mind with ſuch palliatives of vice as made him half a convert to it.

While

While his mind was in this ſtate of trepidation, a young gentleman who had been a fellow-ſtudent with him at Leyden, arrived in England, diſordered in his health, of whom and whoſe converſation he became ſo enamoured, that to entertain him while he was ſeeking the recovery of it, Dyer was almoſt loſt to all the reſt of his friends. To thoſe with whom he was moſt intimate, he would, notwithſtanding the cloſeneſs of his nature, deſcribe him and diſplay his attractions, which as he repreſented them, were learning, wit, politeneſs, elegance, particularly in the article of dreſs; free and open manners, a genteel figure, and other perſonal charms that rendered him the delight of the female ſex. It was a queſtion that ſome of thoſe with whom he was thus open would frequently aſk him, 'What are the moſt of theſe qualifications to you, 'Mr. Dyer, who are a man of a different character? 'you who know the value of wiſdom, and have a mind 'fraught with knowledge, which you are capable of 'applying to many beneficial purpoſes, can never be 'emulous of thoſe diſtinctions which diſcriminate a 'man of pleaſure from a philoſopher;' his anſwers to which ſerved only to ſhew that his judgment was corrupted: The habitation of his friend, whom he thus viſited, was a brothel, and his diſeaſe ſuch as thoſe ſeldom eſcape who frequent houſes of lewd reſort. The ſolicitude which the females in that place ſhewed for the recovery of his friend, their cloſe attendance on him, and aſſiduity in adminiſtering to him his medicines, and ſupplying all his wants, he attributed to genuine love; and ſeemed almoſt to envy in him that power which could intereſt ſo many

... was painted by Sir Joſhua Reynolds, and ... mezzotinto was ſcraped, the print whereof, ... little known, ſold only to his friends; a ... one however was made of it: Bell, the publiſher of the Engliſh poets, cauſed an engraving to be made from it, and prefixed it to the poems of Mr. John Dyer.

I have been thus particular in the hiſtory of this accompliſhed and hopeful young man, whom I once loved with the affection of a brother, with a view to ſhew the tendency of idleneſs, and to point out at what avenues vice may gain admittance in minds ſeemingly the moſt ſtrongly fortified. The aſſailable part of his was laxity of principle: at this entered infidelity, which was followed by ſuch temptations to pleaſure as he could ſee no reaſon to reſiſt: theſe led on deſires after the means of gratification, and the purſuit of them was his deſtruction.

M Ghie was a Scotchman by birth, and educated, in one of the univerſities of that country, for the profeſſion of phyſic. In the rebellion in 1745, he, with a party of young men who, as volunteers, had aſſociated on the ſide of government, bore arms, and was engaged in the ſkirmiſh at Falkirk, which he ever ſpoke of as an ill-conducted buſineſs. When matters were become pretty quiet in Scotland, he took a doctor's degree, and came to London, where, truſting to the friendſhip of his countrymen he hoped to ſucceed in practice, but the town was overſtocked with Scotch phyſicians, and he met with ſmall encouragement, though, by the favour of Dr. Benjamin Avery, the treaſurer of Guy's hoſpital, who had been

been a diſſenting teacher, and at that time was at the head of that intereſt, he got to be elected one of the phyſicians of that charity. He was a learned, ingenious, and modeſt man; and one of thoſe few of his country whom Johnſon could endure. To ſay the truth, he treated him with great civility, and may almoſt be ſaid to have loved him. He inherited a patrimony too ſmall for his ſubſiſtence, and failing in his hope of getting forward in his profeſſion, died of a broken heart, and was buried by a contribution of his friends.

Barker, being by education a diſſenter, was ſent to ſtudy phyſic at Leyden, from whence he returned about the time I am ſpeaking of. He was introduced to us by Dyer, and had been a fellow-ſtudent with him and with Akenſide, Aſkew, Munckley, Mr. Dyſon of the houſe of commons, and others, few of whom are now living. From the converſation of theſe perſons, he learned the principles of lord Shafteſbury's philoſophy, and became, as moſt of them were, a favourer of his notions, and an acute reaſoner on the ſubject of ethics. He was an excellent claſſical ſcholar, a deep metaphyſician, and had enriched his fancy by reading the Italian poets; but he was a thoughtleſs young man, and in all his habits of dreſs and appearance ſo ſlovenly as made him the jeſt of all his companions. Phyſicians in his time were uſed to be full dreſſed; and in his garb of a full ſuit, a brown bye-wig with a knot over one ſhoulder, and a long yellow-hilted ſword, and his hat under his arm, he was a caricature. In his religious principles he profeſſed himſelf an unitarian, for which Johnſon ſo often

ſnubbed

ſnubbed him, that his viſits to us became leſs and leſs frequent. After ſuch a deſcription as that above, it is needleſs to add that Barker ſucceeded ill in his profeſſion. Upon his leaving us, he went to practiſe at Trowbridge in Wiltſhire, but at the end of two years returned to London, and became librarian to the college of phyſicians, in the room of Edwards the ornithologiſt; but for ſome miſbehaviour was diſplaced, and died in obſcurity.

Dr. Richard Bathurſt was a native of Jamaica, and the ſon of an eminent planter in that iſland, who coming to ſettle in England, placed his ſon in London, in order to qualify him for the practice of phyſic. In the courſe of his ſtudies he became acquainted with Johnſon, and was greatly beloved by him for the pregnancy of his parts and the elegance of his manners. Beſides theſe he poſſeſſed the qualities that were moſt likely to recommend him in his profeſſion; but, wanting friends, could make no way in it. He had juſt intereſt enough to be choſen phyſician to an hoſpital that was ſupported by precarious donations, and which yielded him little or no recompence for his attendance, which, as it was only a few hours on certain days in the week, left him, in a great meaſure, maſter of his time. Of this he was a good manager, employing it in the ſtudies relative to his profeſſion, and the improvement of himſelf in polite literature. In conjunction with Johnſon, Hawkeſworth, and others, he wrote 'the Adventurer,' a periodical paper that will hereafter be ſpoken of, purſuing at the ſame time the moſt prudent and probable methods for acquiring reputation and advancing himſelf in his profeſſion; but miſſing of ſucceſs, he embraced the offer

offer of an appointment of phyſician to the army that was ſent on the expedition againſt the Havannah, where, ſoon after his arrival, he was ſeized with a fever that then raged among the troops, and which, before he could be a witneſs of the reduction of the place, put a period to an innocent and uſeful life.

The Spaniards have a proverb, that he who intends to be pope muſt think of nothing elſe. Bathurſt thought of becoming an eminent London phyſician, and omitted no means to attain that character: he ſtudied hard, dreſſed well, and aſſociated with thoſe who were likely to bring him forward, but he failed in his endeavours, and ſhortly before his leaving England confeſſed to Johnſon, that in the courſe of ten years' exerciſe of his faculty, he had never opened his hand to more than one guinea.

The failure of three ſuch perſons as thoſe abovementioned, in a profeſſion in which very many ignorant men have been known to ſucceed *, was matter of wonder to Johnſon and all that knew them. He obeyed that precept of Scripture, which exhorts us to honour the phyſician, and would frequently ſay of thoſe of this country, that they did more good to mankind, without a proſpect of reward, than any profeſſion of men whatever. Bathurſt's want of encouragement affected him much: he often expreſſed to me his ſurprize, that a young man of his endowments and engaging manners, ſhould ſucceed no better, and his diſappointment drew from him a reflection, which he has inſerted in his life of Akenſide, that by an acute obſerver who had looked on the tranſactions of the

* So ignorant as to requeſt of the college the indulgence of an examination in Engliſh.

medical

medical world for half a century, a very curious book might be written on the fortune of phyſicians. Such a book I ſhould be glad to ſee; and if any perſon hereafter ſhall be induced to purſue Johnſon's hint, he may poſſibly think the following remarks which have occurred to me in the courſe of a long intimacy with ſome of the moſt eminent of the profeſſion, not altogether beneath his notice.

Of the profeſſors of medicine, in cities remote from London and in country towns, I know but little; but in the metropolis I am able to ſay, that in my time not only the track of a young phyſician was pretty plainly pointed out, and it is curious to follow it, but that the conduct of ſuch an one was reducible to a ſyſtem. Mead was the ſon of a non-conforming miniſter the teacher of a numerous congregation, who truſting to his influence over them *, bred his ſon a phyſician, with what ſucceſs is well known †. He raiſed the medical character to ſuch a height of dignity as was never ſeen in this or any other country. His example was an inducement with others of the diſſenting miniſters to make phy-

* The intereſt which the diſſenting teachers had with the members of their ſeveral congregations, though now but little known, was formerly very great, and in my memory was ſuch, that ſcarcely any member of a ſeparate congregation would diſpoſe of a daughter, or make a purchaſe, or advance a ſum of money on a mortgage, without firſt conſulting his paſtor.

† I have heard it ſaid, that when Mead began to practiſe, he was a conſtant frequenter of the meeting at Stepney, where his father preached; and that when he was ſent for out of the aſſembly, which he often was, his father would in his prayer inſert a petition in behalf of the ſick perſon. I once mentioned this to Johnſon, who ſaid it was too groſs for belief; but it was not ſo at Batſon's: it paſſed there as a current tradition.

ſicians

ficians of their ſons. Oldfield, Clark, Neſbit, Lobb, and Munckley were the ſons of diſſenting teachers, and they generally ſucceeded. The hoſpital of St. Thomas, and that of Guy, in Southwark, were both under the government of diſſenters and whigs; and as ſoon as any one became phyſician of either, his fortune was looked upon as made. The mention of this circumſtance brings to my remembrance a conteſt, that, to a degree, proves the truth of my aſſertion. Dr. afterwards Sir Edward, Hulſe had been ſome years phyſician to St. Thomas's hoſpital, and being minded to reſign, had ſet his eye upon Dr. Joſeph Letherland, a man of profound erudition, for his ſucceſſor. Hoadly, biſhop of Wincheſter, had about that time a ſon, who having finiſhed his ſtudies in phyſic at Cambridge, had taken his doctor's degree, and was about to ſettle in London. Hoadly was ever the idol of the whigs: he encouraged his ſon to offer himſelf, and the intereſt was divided. Every nerve was ſtrained, and Hoadly miſſed his election by fewer than ten votes *.

The

* It is remarkable of this perſon, that upon this failure he abandoned his profeſſion; not ſo much perhaps becauſe of his diſappointment, as of his principles. To a friend of mine he confeſſed that he was, as to the effects of medicine, a ſceptic; for that upon the principles of philoſophy, he could not account for the operation of any one medicine on the human body. He ſeemed in this inſtance to have adopted the ſentiments of Montaigne, who entertained the ſame doubt, and, ſomewhere in his eſſays, deſcribes a phyſician putting a pill into a patient's mouth, with a commiſſion to follow the circulation, and act only on that part, the toe for inſtance, to which it is directed. Of a different opinion was the father of

The ſame advantage attended the election of a phyſician to the hoſpitals of Bethlehem and St. Bartholomew, which are of royal foundation, and have been under tory government. By cultivating an intereſt with either of the two parties, the ſucceſſion of a young phyſician was almoſt inſured. The frequenting Batſon's or Child's was a declaration of the ſide he took, and his buſineſs was to be indiſcriminately courteous and obſequious to all men, to appear much abroad and in public places, to increaſe his acquaintance and form good connexions, in the doing whereof, a wife, if he were married, that could viſit, play at cards, and tattle, was oftentimes very ſerviceable †. A candidate for practice, purſuing theſe methods and exerciſing the patience of a

of the perſon above-mentioned, Hoadly, biſhop of Wincheſter, when, writing againſt the free-thinkers, he put this ſhrewd queſtion: 'Were all the miſtakes and errors of phyſicians, from the 'beginning of the world to this day, collected into a volume, 'would they afford a good reaſon againſt taking phyſic?'

† The medical character, whatever it is now, was heretofore a grave one: it implies learning and ſagacity, and therefore, notwithſtanding lord Shafteſbury's remark, that gravity is of the very eſſence of impoſture, the candidates for practice, though ever ſo young, found it neceſſary to add to their endeavours a grave and ſolemn deportment, even to affectation. The phyſicians in Hogarth's prints are not caricatures; the full dreſs, with a ſword and a great tye-wig, and the hat under the arm; and the doctors in conſultation, each ſmelling to a gold-headed cane ſhaped like a pariſh-beadle's ſtaff, are pictures of real life in his time, and myſelf have ſeen a young phyſician thus equipped, walk the ſtreets of London without attracting the eyes of paſſengers.

ſetting-dog

ſetting-dog for half a ſcore years in the expectation of deaths, reſignations, or other accidents that occaſion vacancies, at the end thereof either found himſelf an hoſpital phyſician *, and if of Bethlehem a monopoliſt of one, and that a very lucrative branch of practice; or doomed to ſtruggle with difficulties for the remainder of his life.

Jurin, Shaw, James, and ſome few others, recommended themſelves to practice by their writings, but in general the methods of acquiring it, I ſpeak of the city, were ſuch as are above deſcribed. One and only one of the profeſſion I am able to name who purſued a different conduct, and under the greateſt diſadvantages ſucceeded.

This perſon was Dr. Meyer Schomberg, a native of Cologne, who being a jew, and as I have heard related of him, librarian to ſome perſon of diſtinction abroad,

* To theſe obſervations on the profeſſion of phyſic, and the fate of its practitioners, I here add an anecdote of no leſs a perſon than Dr. Mead himſelf, who very early in his life attained to this ſtation of eminence, and met with all the ſubſequent encouragement due to his great merit, and who nevertheleſs died in a ſtate of indigence.

The income ariſing from his practice I have heard eſtimated at 7000l. a year, and he had one if not two fortunes left him, not by relations but by friends no way allied to him; but his munificence was ſo great, and his paſſion for collecting books, paintings, and curioſities, ſo ſtrong, that he made no ſavings. His manuſcripts he parted with in his life-time to ſupply his wants, which towards his end were become ſo preſſing, that he once requeſted of the late lord Orrery the loan of five guineas on ſome toys, viz. pieces of kennel-coal wrought into vaſes and other elegant forms, which he produced from his pocket. This ſtory, incredible as it may ſeem, lord Orrery told Johnſon, and from him I had it.

left

provoked his reſentment ſo highly, that he ſeemed reſolved on a perpetual enmity againſt the members of that body; who, on their part, looking on him as little better than a foreign mountebank, declined, as much as poſſible, meeting him in conſultation, and thereby, for ſome time, checked his practice.

He had a ſon whom he brought up to his own profeſſion, who took it into his head, that having been admitted a licentiate, he was virtually a fellow, and claimed to be admitted as ſuch: his father encouraged him, and inſtituted a proceſs in his behalf, of which there had been no precedent ſince the time that Jefferies was chancellor. It was no leſs than a petition to the king, requeſting him, in the perſon of the lord-chancellor, to exerciſe his viſitatorial power over the college, and reſtore the licentiates to their rights, which, by their arbitrary proceedings, the reſident and fellows had, for a ſucceſſion of ages, deprived them of. This petition came on to be heard at Lincoln's-inn hall, before the lord chief juſtice Willes, the lord chief-baron Smythe, and Sir John Eardley Wilmot, lords commiſſioners of the great ſeal, but the allegations therein contained not being ſufficiently ſupported, the ſame was diſmiſſed; it was nevertheleſs looked on as the moſt formidable attack on the college it had ever ſuſtained, and may be ſaid to have ſhaken its conſtitution to the very centre.

Political aſſociations and religious ſects are excellent nurſes to young men of profeſſions, eſpecially of that of which I am ſpeaking; Ratcliffe and Freind owed their fortunes to the ſupport of the tories and jacobites; Mead and Hulſe to the whigs, and Schomberg to the jews. The quakers alſo, no contemptible

... had power and intereſt ſufficient to ... great practice one of their own deno- ... was John Fothergill, a young man of ... who being bred an apothecary, ... obtained a Scotch degree, ſettled in ... and attached himſelf to Schomberg, taking ... parts of his conduct, for his exemplar: ... upon Schomberg's deceaſe, he ſlid into his ... and became one of the moſt popular of ... phyſicians. Theſe two perſons, firſt one, ... the other, for full thirty years, carried all ... them; and within that ſpace of time, not ... than twenty of the profeſſion, whom I could ... lived in great ſtraits, ſome of them leaving, ... deceaſe, ſcarce ſufficient to bury them.

... theſe, and many other inſtances that might ... duced, it is evident, that neither learning, parts, ... kill, nor even all theſe united, are ſufficient to ... ſucceſs in the profeſſion I am ſpeaking of; ... that, without the concurrence of adventitious ... inſtances, which no one can pretend to define, ... ſician of the greateſt merit may be loſt to the ...; and further it may be ſaid, that the faireſt ... may be fruſtrated by the want of that qua- ... which Swift ſomewhere calls an aldermanly ..., diſcretion, but is in truth, of greater effi- ... in our intercourſe with mankind, than all ... e put together. Had Akenſide been poſſeſſed ... is gift, he had probably become the firſt in his ...y; but that he was able to acquire no other ... of celebrity than that of a ſcholar and a poet, ... be accounted for by ſome particulars in his ... conduct, with which few but myſelf, who knew

:w him well, are acquainted, and which I here in-
as ſuppletory to thoſe which Johnſon has recorded
iim. Mr. Dyſon and he were fellow ſtudents, the
: of law and the other of phyſic, at Leyden;
:re, being of congenial tempers, a friendſhip com-
ıced between them that laſted through their lives.
ey left the univerſity at the ſame time, and both
led in London: Mr. Dyſon took to the bar,
being poſſeſſed of a handſome fortune ſupported
friend while he was endeavouring to make him-
known as a phyſician; but in a ſhort time, hav-
purchaſed of Mr. Hardinge, his place of clerk
the houſe of commons, he quitted Weſtminſter
, and for the purpoſe of introducing Akenſide
acquaintance in an opulent neighbourhood near
town, bought a houſe at North-End, Hampſtead;
:re they dwelt together during the ſummer ſeaſon:
ıuenting the long room, and all clubs, and aſſem-
s of the inhabitants.

At theſe meetings, which as they were not ſelect,
ſt be ſuppoſed to have conſiſted of ſuch perſons
uſually meet for the purpoſe of goſſiping, men
wealth, but of ordinary endowments, and able
alk of little elſe than news, and the occurrences of
day, Akenſide was for diſplaying thoſe talents
ch had acquired him the reputation he enjoyed
other companies; but here they were of little uſe
iim, on the contrary, they tended to engage him
diſputes that betrayed him into a contempt of
ſe that differed in opinion from him. It was
nd out that he was a man of low birth, and a
endant on Mr. Dyſon; circumſtances that fur-
ıed thoſe whom he offended with a ground of re-

proach, that reduced him to the neceſſity of aſſerting in terms that he was a gentleman.

Little could be done at Hampſtead after matters had proceeded to this extremity; Mr. Dyſon parted with his villa at North-End, and ſettled his friend in a ſmall houſe in Bloomſbury ſquare; aſſigning for his ſupport ſuch a part of his income as enabled him to keep a chariot.

In this new ſituation Akenſide uſed every endeavour to become popular, but defeated them all by the high opinion he every where manifeſted of himſelf, and the little condeſcenſion he ſhewed to men of inferior endowments; by his love of political controverſy, his authoritative cenſure of the public councils, and his bigotted notions reſpecting government, ſubjects foreign to his profeſſion, and with which ſome of the wiſeſt of it have thought it prudent not to concern themſelves. In the winter evenings he frequented Tom's coffee-houſe in Devereux court, then the reſort of ſome of the moſt eminent men for learning and ingenuity of the time, with ſome of whom he became entangled in diſputes and altercations, chiefly on ſubjects of literature and politics, that fixed on his character the ſtamp of haughtineſs and ſelf-conceit, and drew him into diſagreeable ſituations.

T e was at that time a man of the name of Ballow, who l to paſs his evenings in the ſociety above-me n, a lawyer by profeſſion*, but of no practice; havi by intereſt of ſome of the Townſhends, en a kind of law tutor, obtained a t heq , which yielded him a handſome

* of a treatiſe on equity, in folio, publiſhed

income,

ome, and exempted him from the neceſſity of nding Weſtminſter-hall. He was a man of deep l extenſive learning, but of vulgar manners; and ng of a ſplenetic temper, envied Akenſide for that uence which he diſplayed in his converſation, and his own phraſeology very low. Moreover he hated for his republican principles; and finally, being ſelf a man of ſolid learning, affected to treat him pretender to literature, and made it his ſtudy to roke him.

ne evening at the coffee-houſe a diſpute between e two perſons roſe ſo high, that for ſome ex- ion uttered by Ballow, Akenſide thought him- obliged to demand an apology, which not being to obtain, he ſent his adverſary a challenge in ing. Ballow, a little deformed man, well known ſaunterer in the park, about Weſtminſter, and in ſtreets between Charing croſs and the houſes of iament, though remarkable for a ſword of an ſual length, which he conſtantly wore when he t abroad, had no inclination for fighting, and lined an anſwer. The demand of ſatisfaction was wed by ſeveral attempts on the part of Akenſide e Ballow at his lodgings, but he kept cloſe, till the interpoſition of friends the difference could adjuſted *. By his conduct in this buſineſs, Akenſide

* This method of reſenting affronts offered to phyſicians is not The grave and placid Dr. Mead was once provoked to it r. Woodward of Greſham college, who, in the exerciſe of his ffice, had ſaid or done ſomething to offend him: he went oodward's lodgings to demand ſatisfaction, and meeting him r the arch in the way from the outer court to the green

Akenſide acquired but little reputation for courage, for the accommodation was not brought about by any conceſſions of his adverſary, but by a reſolution from which neither of them would depart, for one would not fight in the morning, nor the other in the afternoon: all that he got by it was, the character of an iraſcible man; and many who admired him for his genius and parts were ſhy of becoming his intimates. Yet where there was no competition for applauſe or literary reputation, he was an eaſy companion, and would bear with ſuch rudeneſs as would have angered almoſt any one. Saxby, of the cuſtom-houſe, who was every evening at Tom's, and by the bluntneſs of his behaviour, and the many ſhrewd ſayings he was uſed to utter, had acquired the privilege of Therſites, of ſaying whatever he would, was once in my hearing, inveighing againſt the profeſſion of phyſic, which Akenſide took upon him to defend. This railer, after labouring to prove that it was all impoſture, concluded his diſcourſe with this ſentiment: 'Doctor,' ſaid he, 'after all you have ſaid, 'my opinion of the profeſſion of phyſic is this, The 'ancients endeavoured to make it a ſcience and failed; 'and the moderns to make it a trade and have ſuc-

court, drew his ſword and bid him defend himſelf or beg pardon, which, it is ſuppoſed, he did. This rencounter is recorded in an engraved view of Greſham college, inſerted in Dr. Ward's lives of the Greſham profeſſors, in which Woodward is repreſented kneeling, and laying his ſword at the feet of his antagoniſt; and was thus explained to me by Dr. Lawrence the phyſician. Mead was the friend and patron of Ward, which muſt have been his inducement to perpetuate an event ſo nature of his work.

'ceeded.'

ceeded.' Akenſide took this ſarcaſm in good part, d joined in the laugh which it occaſioned.

The value of that precept which exhorts us to live ceably with all men, or in other words to avoid rating enemies, can only be eſtimated by the reflec- n on thoſe many amiable qualities againſt which the glect of it will preponderate. Akenſide was a man religion and ſtrict virtue, a philoſopher, a ſcholar, d a fine poet. His converſation was of the moſt lightful kind, learned, inſtructive, and without any ectation of wit, chearful and entertaining. One of pleaſanteſt days of my life I paſſed with him, Mr. rſon, and another friend, at Putney bowling-green uſe, where a neat and elegant dinner, the enlivening ſhine of a ſummer's day, and the view of an un- ouded ſky, were the leaſt of our gratifications. In rfect good humour with himſelf and all around him, ſeemed to feel a joy that he lived, and poured out gratulations to the great diſpenſer of all felicity in preſſions that Plato himſelf might have uttered on h an occaſion. In converſations with ſelect friends, d thoſe whoſe courſe of ſtudy had been nearly the ne with his own, it was an uſual thing with him in ations to the memory of eminent men among the cients, to bring their characters into view, and there- give occaſion to expatiate on thoſe particulars of ir lives that had rendered them famous: his method s to arrange them into three claſſes, philoſophers, ets, and legiſlators.

That a character thus formed ſhould fail of recom- nding itſelf to general eſteem, and procure to the ſeſſor of it thoſe benefits which it is in the power of

[illegible] may ſeem a wonder, but it is [illegible] that negative qualities are more conducive [illegible] than poſitive; and that, with no [illegible] character than is attainable by any one who [illegible] ſucceeds taciturnity will keep his opinions [illegible] conform to the practice of others, and [illegible] neither friendſhip for nor enmity againſt any [illegible] competitor for the good opinion of the world, [illegible] or emoluments, and even dignities, ſtands a [illegible] chance of ſucceſs, than one of the moſt eſtabliſhed reputation for learning and ingenuity. The [illegible] of this obſervation Akenſide himſelf lived to [illegible] ence, who in a competition for the place of phyſician to the Charterhouſe, was unable to prevail againſt an obſcure man, devoid of every quality that might ſerve to recommend him, and whoſe ſole [illegible] was that of being diſtantly related to the [illegible] Lord Holland.

To thoſe perſons who have been diſappointed in their hopes of ſucceſs in the medical profeſſion, may be added one, to whom his failure was ſo far from being a misfortune, that it was the means of placing him in a ſtation where only his worth could be known, and of exalting him to dignities in which he rendered more ſervice to mankind, than he could have done in any other capacity whatever. This was Dr. Sherlock, the late archbiſhop of Canterbury; of whom I ſhall relate a few particulars not generally known.

We are told by the reverend authors of his Life, prefixed to his ſermons publiſhed by them, that he had been deſtined by his father for orders among the diſſenters; but that not being able to decide on

[illegible]

ne abſtruſe ſpeculative doctrines, nor to determine ſolutely what communion he ſhould embrace, he ap- ied himſelf to the ſtudy of phyſic. To this fact I add, t he was alſo a candidate for practice, and that in or- to obtain it, he put on the garb of a phyſician; and a year or ſomewhat more frequented Batſon's ffee-houſe in the city, but had never any calls from nce *. His biographers abovementioned further ; that being recommended by Mr. afterwards hop Butler, to Mr. Edward Talbot, a ſon of bi- p Talbot; that gentleman promiſed in caſe he ſe to take orders in the church, to engage his fa- r to provide for him, and that foreſeeing many tacles in his purſuit of this profeſſion, Mr. Secker, he had not then obtained the degree of doctor his faculty, embraced the offer. They add, that in ſummer of 1720, he was introduced to Mr. Talbot, l that with him he cultivated a cloſe acquaint- e. This I conceive was not till after he had de the experiment abovementioned, and determined the change of his profeſſion. Mr. Talbot's recom- ndation of his friend to his father ſucceeded, but he d not to ſee the fruit of it; for in a few months r, he was ſeized with the ſmall-pox and died; which particular agrees with the following, communicated ne by a perſon of unqueſtionable veracity; viz. that n the firſt appearance of the diſorder, the ſymptoms e very unfavourable, and it ſeemed neceſſary in er to aſſiſt the eruption, that ſome perſon ſhould p in the ſame bed with the patient. Mr. Secker

* Ex relatione Peter Flood the maſter of the coffee-houſe, who embered his coming there.

voluntarily

voluntarily undertook this office, and though it failed of ſucceſs, gave a convincing proof of his gratitude to one whoſe friendſhip was likely to prove, as it afterwards did, the making of his fortunes.

To return from this digreſſion, the club in Ivy lane, compoſed of the perſons above deſcribed, was a great relief to Johnſon after the fatigue of ſtudy, and he generally came to it with both a corporal and mental appetite; for our converſations ſeldom began till after a ſupper, ſo very ſolid and ſubſtantial, as led us to think, that with him it was a dinner. By the help of this refection, and no other incentive to hilarity than lemonade, Johnſon was, in a ſhort time after our aſſembling, transformed into a new creature: his habitual melancholy and laſſitude of ſpirit gave way; his countenance brightened; his mind was made to expand, and his wit to ſparkle: he told excellent ſtories; and in his didactic ſtile of converſation, both inſtructed and delighted us.

It required, however, on the part of us, who conſidered ourſelves as his diſciples, ſome degree of compliance with his political prejudices: the greater number of our company were whigs, and I was not a tory, and we all ſaw the prudence of avoiding to call the then late adventurer in Scotland, or his adherents, by thoſe names which others heſitated not to give them, or to bring to remembrance what had paſſed, a few years before, on Tower-hill. But the greateſt of all our difficulties was, to keep alive in Johnſon's mind a ſenſe of the decorum due to the age, character, and profeſſion of Dr. Salter, whom he took delight in contradicting, and bringing his learning

ing, his judgment, and ſometimes his veracity to the teſt. And here I muſt obſerve, that Johnſon, though a high-churchman, and by conſequence a friend to the clergy as a body of men, was, with reſpect to individuals, frequently, not to ſay wanting in civility, but to a very great degree ſplenetic and pertinacious. For this behaviour we could but one way account: He had been bred in an univerſity, and muſt there have had in proſpect thoſe advantages, thoſe ſtations in life, or perhaps thoſe dignities, which an academic education leads to. Miſſing theſe by his adverſe fortunes, he looked on every dignitary under a biſhop, for to thoſe of that order he was more than ſufficiently reſpectful, and, to deſcend lower, on every one that poſſeſſed the emoluments of his profeſſion, as occupying a ſtation to which himſelf had a better title, and, if his inferior in learning or mental endowments, treated him as little better than an uſurper.

Dr. Salter was too much a man of the world to reſent this behaviour: 'Study to be quiet' ſeemed to be his rule; and he might poſſibly think, that a victory over Johnſon in any matter of diſpute, could it have been obtained, would have been dearly purchaſed at the price of peace. It was nevertheleſs a temerarious act in him to venture into a ſociety, of which ſuch a man was the head. Dean Swift in his character of Coruſodes*, has ſo developed the arts by which mere men of the world attain to eccleſiaſtical dignities and preferments, as ſhould make ſuch for ever cautious how they riſque detection; and accordingly we ſee that

* In his eſſay on the fates of clergymen.

many

many among them are in general backward in forming connections and aſſociating with ſcholars and the learned of the laity, at leaſt with men of Johnſon's temper, who, where he had reaſon to expect learning, never ſhewed mercy to ignorance.

Hawkeſworth was a man of fine parts, but no learning: his reading had been irregular and deſultory: the knowledge he had acquired, he, by the help of a good memory retained, ſo that it was ready at every call, but on no ſubject had he ever formed any ſyſtem. All of ethics that he knew, he had got from Pope's 'Eſſay on Man,' and Epiſtles; he had read the modern French writers, and more particularly the poets, and with the aid of Keill's Introduction, Chambers's Dictionary, and other ſuch common books, had attained ſuch an inſight into phyſics, as enabled him to talk on the ſubject. In the more valuable branches of learning, he was deficient. His office of curator of the Magazine gave him great opportunities of improvement, by an extenſive correſpondence with men of all profeſſions: it increaſed his little ſtock of literature, and furniſhed him with more than a competent ſhare of that intelligence which is neceſſary to qualify a man for converſation. He had a good ſhare of wit, and a vein of humour. With all theſe talents, Hawkeſworth could be no other than an inſtructive and entertaining companion.

Of a far more valuable kind were the endowments of Dyer; keen penetration and deep erudition were the qualities that ſo diſtinguiſhed his character, that, in ſome inſtances, Johnſon might almoſt be ſaid to have looked up to him. As the purpoſe of our meetings

was

as the free communication of ſentiments, and the enjoyment of ſocial intercourſe, our converſations were unreſtrained, and the ſubjects thereof multifarious. Dyer was a divine, a linguiſt, a mathematician, a metaphyſician, a natural philoſopher, a claſſical ſcholar, and a critic; this Johnſon ſaw and felt, and never, but in defence of ſome fundamental and important truth, would he contradict him. The deference thus shewn by Johnſon to Dyer, may be ſaid to have been involuntary, or reſpect extorted; for in their religious and political ſentiments their diſagreement was ſo great, that leſs of it would, in ſome minds, have engendered hatred. Of the fundamental and important truths above-mentioned, there was one, namely the nature of moral obligation, of which Johnſon was uniformly tenacious. Every one, verſed in ſtudies of this kind, knows, that there are, among the moderns, three ſects or claſſes of writers on morality, who, though perhaps deriving their reſpective tenets from the Socratic, the Academic and other ancient ſchools, are, in theſe times, conſidered, at leaſt, as the guides of ſects; theſe are the characteriſtic lord Shafteſbury, Dr. Samuel Clarke, and Mr. Wollaſton: the firſt of theſe makes virtue to conſiſt in a courſe of action conformable to what is called the moral ſenſe; Wollaſton ſays it is acting, in all caſes, according to truth, and treating things as they are; Dr. Clarke ſuppoſes all rational agents as under an obligation to act agreeably to the relations that ſubſiſt between ſuch, or according to what he calls the fitneſs of things. Johnſon was ever an admirer of Clarke, and agreed with him in this and moſt other of his opinions, excepting in that of the

Trinity, in which he ſaid, as Dr. Bentley, though no very ſound believer, had done before, that Dr. Waterland had foiled him. He therefore fell in with the ſcheme of fitneſs, and thereby profeſſed himſelf an adverſary, in the mildeſt ſenſe of the word, and an opponent of Dyer, who, having been a pupil of Hutcheſon, favoured, notwithſtanding his ſuſpected infidelity, this and many other notions and opinions of lord Shafteſbury.

To ſay of lord Shafteſbury that he was but a ſuſpected infidel, is ſurely treating him mildly, and I forbear to tax him with unbelief, only becauſe in his 'Letters to a ſtudent at the Univerſity *,' he has affected to ſpeak of the Chriſtian religion, as if half perſuaded of its truth. Nevertheleſs, throughout his works it may be diſcerned, that he omits no opportunity of branding it with ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm, and of repreſenting the primitive profeſſors of it as provoking, by their factious and turbulent behaviour, thoſe perſecutions from whence they derive the glory of martyrs. For theſe ſentiments, as alſo for the invidious compariſons he is ever drawing between the

* A young man, named Michael Ainſworth, the ſon, as I have been informed, of the pariſh clerk of Winborne St. Giles in Dorſetſhire, the ſeat of the Shafteſbury family, whom his lordſhip ſent to and ſupported at Oxford, with a view of ſettling him in the church, and giving to it a divine of his own forming. His lordſhip, however, failed of his end: the young man, if not in his religious, in his political principles choſe to think for himſelf; he might be as good a chriſtian, but was not ſo good a whig as his patron intended him to be: he thereby loſt his favour, and incurred the cenſure of ingratitude.

philoſophers Plato, Epictetus, Seneca and others, and the fathers, and his many contemptuous ſneers at the writers on the ſide of chriſtianity, Johnſon bore him no good will, neither did he ſeem at all to reliſh the cant of the Shafteſburian ſchool, nor inclined to admit the pretenſions of thoſe who profeſſed to be of it, to taſtes and perceptions which are not common to all men; a taſte in morals, in poetry, and proſe-writing, in painting, in ſculpture, in muſic, in architecture, and in government! a taſte that cenſured every production, and induced them to reprobate every effort of genius that fell ſhort of their own capricious ſtandard*.

Little as Johnſon liked the notions of lord Shafteſbury, he ſtill leſs approved thoſe of ſome later writers, who have purſued the ſame train of thinking and reaſoning, namely, Hutcheſon, Dr. Nettleton, and Mr. Harris of Saliſbury, of which latter, for the many ſingularities of ſentiment and ſtyle in his 'Hermes,' he ſcrupled not to ſpeak very lightly. There is a book extant, intitled, 'Letters concern-'ing Mind,' written by a perſon of the ſame ſchool, named Petvin, which, with an arrow taken from the quiver of their great maſter, a ſtroke of ridicule

* See lord Shafteſbury's 'Letter on Deſign,' paſſim, in which theſe fanciful notions prevail, that a taſte, an ear, a judgment, are the conſequences of freedom, or civil liberty, and that not having attained to the perfection thereof, our eccleſiaſtical ſtructures, particularly the metropolitan, retain much of what artiſts call the Gothic kind; and compare with it his own puerile devices, invented with great labour to illuſtrate the characteriſtics.

ſhot

ſhot from one of the Idlers, Johnſon may be fairly ſaid to have transfixed. The paſſage is in a high degree ludicrous, and will, I am perſuaded, juſtify the inſertion of it here at length.

'The author begins by declaring, that *the ſorts of* '*things are things that now are, have been, and ſhall be,* '*and the things that ſtrictly* ARE. In this poſition, 'except the laſt clauſe, in which he uſes ſomething of 'the ſcholaſtic language, there is nothing but what 'every man has heard, and imagines himſelf to know. 'But who would not believe that ſome wonderful no-'velty is preſented to his intellect, when he is after-'wards told, in the true *bugbear* ſtyle, that *the* ares, *in* '*the former ſenſe, are things that lie between the* have-'beens *and* ſhall-bees. *The* have-beens *are things* '*that are paſt*; *the* ſhall-bes *are things that are to* '*come*; *and the things that* ARE, in the latter ſenſe, '*are things that have not been, nor ſhall be, nor ſtand in* '*the midſt of ſuch as are before them, or ſhall be after* '*them. The things that have been, and ſhall be, have* '*reſpect to preſent, paſt, and future. Thoſe likewiſe* '*that now* ARE *have moreover place*; *that, for inſtance,* '*which is here, that which is to the eaſt, that which is to* '*the weſt.*

'All this, my dear reader, is very ſtrange; but 'though it be ſtrange, it is not new; ſurvey theſe 'wonderful ſentences again, and they will be found 'to contain nothing more than very plain truths, 'which, till this author aroſe, had always been deli-'vered in plain language.'

That Dyer ſhould be a friend to the doctrine of the moral ſenſe, and to the other tenets of this ſchool, is

not

not to be wondered at, ſeeing that he was a pupil of Hutcheſon, and that his were the opinions that prevailed at Glaſgow, where he taught, and alſo at Leyden, whither Dyer and many of his fellow-ſtudents in that univerſity, removed. Akenſide and Dyſon, who were of the number, were deep in this ſcheme, and alſo abettors of that fanciful notion, that ridicule is the teſt of truth.

The topics above-mentioned were, not unfrequently, the ſubjects of altercation between Johnſon and Dyer, in which it might be obſerved, as Johnſon once did of two diſputants, that the one had ball without powder, and the other powder without ball; for Dyer, though beſt ſkilled in the controverſy, was inferior to his adverſary in the power of reaſoning, and Johnſon, who was not always maſter of the queſtion, was ſeldom at a loſs for ſuch ſophiſtical arguments as the other was unable to anſwer.

In theſe diſputations I had opportunities of obſerving what others have taken occaſion to remark, viz. not only that in converſation Johnſon made it a rule to talk his beſt, but that on many ſubjects he was not uniform in his opinions, contending as often for victory as for truth: at one time *good*, at another *evil* was predominant in the moral conſtitution of the world. Upon one occaſion, he would deplore the non-obſervance of Good-Friday, and on another deny, that among us of the preſent age there is any decline of public worſhip. He would ſometimes contradict ſelf-evident propoſitions, ſuch as, that the luxury of this country has increaſed with its riches; and that the practice of card-playing is more general than here-

tofore. At this verſatility of temper, none, however, took offence; as Alexander and Cæſar were born for conqueſt, ſo was Johnſon for the office of a ſympoſiarch, to preſide in all converſations; and I never yet ſaw the man who would venture to conteſt his right.

Let it not, however, be imagined, that the members of this our club met together, with the temper of gladiators, or that there was wanting among us a diſpoſition to yield to each other in all diverſities of opinion; and indeed, diſputation was not, as in many aſſociations of this kind, the purpoſe of our meeting: nor were our converſations, like thoſe of the Rota club, reſtrained to particular topics. On the contrary, it may be ſaid, that with our graveſt diſcourſes was intermingled

'Mirth, that after no repenting draws,'

MILTON.

for not only in Johnſon's melancholy there were lucid intervals, but he was a great contributor to the mirth of converſation, by the many witty ſayings he uttered, and the many excellent ſtories which his memory had treaſured up, and he would on occaſion relate; ſo that thoſe are greatly miſtaken who infer, either from the general tendency of his writings, or that appearance of hebetude which marked his countenance when living, and is diſcernible in the pictures and prints of him, that he could only reaſon and diſcuſs, dictate and controul.

In the talent of humour there hardly ever was his equal, except perhaps among the old comedians, ſuch

ſuch as Tarleton, and a few others mentioned by Cibber. By means of this he was enabled to give to any relation that required it, the graces and aids of expreſſion, and to diſcriminate with the niceſt exactneſs the characters of thoſe whom it concerned. In aping this faculty I have ſeen Warburton diſconcerted, and when he would fain have been thought a man of pleaſantry, not a little out of countenance.

I have already mentioned, that Johnſon's motive for the inſtitution of this ſociety was, his love of converſation, and the neceſſity he found himſelf under of ſeeking relief from the fatigue of compiling his dictionary: the ſame neceſſity operated ſtill farther, and induced him to undertake, what moſt other men would have thought an additional fatigue, the publiſhing a periodical paper. The truth is, that not having now for a conſiderable ſpace committed to writing aught but words and their ſignifications, his mind was become tumid, and laboured to be delivered of thoſe many and great conceptions, which for years it had been forming. The ſtudy of human life and manners, had been the chief employment of his thoughts, and to a knowledge of theſe, all his reading, all his converſation, and all his meditations tended. By theſe exerciſes, and the aid of an imagination that was ever teeming with new ideas, he accumulated a fund of moral ſcience, that was more than ſufficient for ſuch an undertaking, and became in a very eminent degree qualified for the office of an inſtructor of mankind in their greateſt and moſt important concerns.

I am ſenſible of the contempt and ridicule with which thoſe authors are treated by lord Shafteſbury, who, differing from his favourites the ancients, have preferred to their method of writing in ſoliloquy and dialogue, the more authoritative and didactic form of eſſays; but who knows not that the ways by which intelligence and wiſdom may be communicated are many and various, and that Johnſon has followed the beſt exemplars? What are the ſapiential books in the Scriptures, and all collections of precepts and counſels, but moral eſſays, leſſons of œconomical prudence, and rules for the conduct of human life?

In a full perſuaſion of the utility of this mode of inſtruction, it undoubtedly was, that Montaigne, lord Bacon, Oſborne, Cowley, Sir William Temple, and others, in thoſe excellent diſcourſes, which they have not ſcrupled to term eſſays, have laid out their minds, and communicated to mankind that ſkill in worldly, and I will add, in heavenly prudence, which is ſcarcely attainable but by long experience, and an exerciſe both of the active and contemplative life; and to diſſeminate and recommend the principles and practice of religion and virtue; as alſo, to correct the leſſer foibles in behaviour, and to render human intercourſe eaſy and delightful, was the avowed deſign of thoſe periodical eſſays, which, in the beginning of this century, contributed to form the manners of the then riſing generation.

A long ſpace had intervened ſince the publication of the Tatlers, Guardians, and Spectators: it is true it had been filled up by The Lover, and The Reader, The Theatre, The Lay-monaſtery, The Plain-dealer,

The

The Free-thinker, The Speculatiſt, The Cenſor, and other productions of the like kind; but of ſome of theſe it may be ſaid, that they were nearly ſtill-born, and of others, that they enjoyed a duration little more extended than that of the ephemeron: ſo that Johnſon had no competitors for applauſe; his way was open, and he had the choice of many paths. Add to this, that a period of near forty years, in a country where commerce and its concomitant luxury had been increaſing, had given riſe to new modes of living, and even to characters that had ſcarcely before been known to exiſt. The clergyman was now become an amphibious being, that is to ſay, both an eccleſiaſtic and a laic; the ſtately ſtalking fop, whoſe gait, as Cibber deſcribes it, reſembled that of a peacock, was ſucceeded by a coxcomb of another ſpecies, a fidgetting, tripping animal, that for agility might be compared to a graſshopper; the ſhopkeeper was transformed into a merchant, and the parſimonious ſtock-broker into a man of gallantry; the apron, the badge of mechanic occupations, in all its varieties of ſtuff and colour, was laid aſide; phyſicians and lawyers were no longer diſtinguiſhable by their garb; the former had laid aſide the great wig, and the latter ceaſed to wear black, except in the actual exerciſe of their profeſſions: in ſhort, a few years of public tranquillity had transformed a whole nation into gentlemen.

In female life the refinements were alſo to be noted. In conſequence of a better education than it had been uſual to beſtow on them, women were become proficients in literature, and a man might read a lady's letter without bluſhing at the ſpelling. The convenience

of turnpike-roads had deſtroyed the diſtinction between town and country manners, and the maid of honour and the farmer's wife put on a cap of the lateſt form, almoſt at the ſame inſtant. I mention this, becauſe it may have eſcaped the obſervation of many, that a new faſhion pervades the whole of this our iſland almoſt as inſtantaneouſly as a ſpark of fire illuminates a maſs of gunpowder*.

Theſe, it may be ſaid, were but foibles in the manners of the times; but there were certain notions and opinions, which having been diſſeminated ſubſequent to

* The town-life had alſo received great improvements, which have ſince been further extended: public entertainments are now enjoyed in an immediate ſucceſſion: from the play the company are generally able to get away by eleven, the hour of aſſembling at other places of amuſement; from theſe the hour of retirement is three, which gives, till noon the next day, nine hours for reſt; and after that ſufficient time for a ride, auctions, or ſhopping, before five or ſix the dinner hour. Nor is this ſeeming indulgence and immoderate purſuit of pleaſure ſo inconſiſtent with the attendance on public worſhip as it may ſeem: methodiſm, or ſomething like it, in many inſtances, makes them compatible; ſo that I have known a lady of high rank enjoy the pleaſures of a rout, that almoſt barred acceſs to her houſe, on the evening of a Sunday which ſhe had begun with prayer, and a participation of the ſolemnities which at an early hour in that day, are conſtantly celebrated at St. James's chapel.

For moſt of theſe refinements on our public diverſions we are indebted to the late Mrs. Cornelys, to whoſe elegant taſte for pleaſure the magiſtrates of Turin and Bruſſels were ſo blind, and of her worth ſo inſenſible, that, as I was given to underſtand by intelligence communicated to me in my judicial capacity, they ſeverally drove her out of both thoſe cities: this hoſpitable country, however, afforded her an aſylum; and in Weſtminſter ſhe was permitted to improve our manner, without any further interruption, than a preſentment of her houſe as a nuiſance, by a grand jury of the county.

to the publication of the laſt of the collections of eſſays above-mentioned, eſcaped their cenſure, and were now become principles that had miſ-led many, and were likely to affect the moral conduct of the young and unthinking: theſe had for their authors and propagators ſuch men as Collins, Mandeville †, Morgan and Tindal; the firſt pair deiſts, and the latter infidels. And to theſe I might add, though I would not brand

county, which, had it been proſecuted, it might have been my lot to try; but by the aid of her friends ſhe found means to ſmother it. Soon after, ſhe became a priſoner for debts to a large amount; but in the riots in 1780 found means to eſcape from confinement, and has never ſince been heard of.

† Mandeville, whoſe chriſtian name was Bernard, was a native of Dort in Holland. He came to England young, and, as he ſays in ſome of his writings, was ſo pleaſed with the country, that he took up his reſidence in it, and made the language his ſtudy. He lived in obſcure lodgings in London, and betook himſelf to the profeſſion of phyſic, but was never able to acquire much practice. He was the author of the book above-mentioned, as alſo of 'Free Thoughts on Religion,' and 'a Diſcourſe on Hypochondriac Affections,' which Johnſon would often commend; and wrote beſides, ſundry papers in the 'London Journal,' and other ſuch publications, to favour the cuſtom of drinking ſpirituous liquors, to which employment of his pen, it is ſuppoſed he was hired by the diſtillers. I once heard a London phyſician, who had married the daughter of one of that trade, mention him as a good ſort of man, and one that he was acquainted with, and at the ſame time aſſert a fact, which I ſuppoſe he had learned from Mandeville, that the children of women addicted to dram-drinking, were never troubled with the rickets. He is ſaid to have been coarſe and overbearing in his manners where he durſt be ſo; yet a great flatterer of ſome vulgar Dutch merchants, who allowed him a penſion. This laſt information comes from a clerk of a city attorney, through whoſe hands the money paſſed.

them with ſo harſh an appellation as the laſt, Toland, Gordon, Trenchard, and others of that claſs of writers, men who having drank the lees of the Bangorian controverſy, were become ſo intoxicated in their notions of civil and religious liberty, as to talk of the majeſty of the people! and ſhewed themſelves anxious that their zeal for religion might be eſtimated by their jealouſy of all eſtabliſhments for the ſupport of it.

The flimſy arguments contained in Collins's diſcourſe on Free-thinking, had been refuted with great learning and pleaſantry by Bentley, before which time, as I have been informed, a clergyman in his habit, walking the ſtreets of London, was in danger of being affronted; but the poiſon of Mandeville had affected many. His favourite principle is, the title to the moſt noted of all his books, 'Private vices, public benefits,' throughout which he labours to inculcate, as a ſubordinate poſition, this other, that man is a ſelfiſh being, and that all that we call human beneficence is to be accounted for upon principles that exclude the love of any but ourſelves *.

Johnſon has remarked, that malevolence to the clergy is ſeldom at a great diſtance from irreverence for religion. He ſaw the features of that malevolence

* Lord Macclesfield, when chief-juſtice, was uſed often to have him at his houſe, and was pleaſed with his converſation. He once got Mr. Addiſon to meet him, of whom being aſked his opinion by his lordſhip, Mandeville anſwered, he thought him a parſon in a tye-wig. See Johnſon's life of Addiſon among the Lives of the Poets.

in

in the writings of theſe men, and the point at which free-thinking was likely to terminate; and taking up the defence of religion where Mr. Addiſon left it, he made it a part of his deſign as well to adduce new arguments for its ſupport, and to enforce the practice of virtue, as to correct thoſe errors in the ſmaller concerns and occupations of life, the ridiculing which rendered his paper an amuſement.

In this ſituation and ſtate of public manners Johnſon formed the plan of his Rambler, and with what ſpirit he entered upon it may be inferred from the following ſolemn addreſs, which he compoſed and offered up to the divine Being for a bleſſing on the undertaking:

'Almighty God, the giver of all good things, without whoſe help all labour is ineffectual, and without whoſe grace all wiſdom is folly; grant, I beſeech Thee, that in this undertaking thy holy ſpirit may not be with-held from me, but that I may promote thy glory, and the ſalvation of myſelf and others: grant this, O Lord, for the ſake of thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt. Amen.'

The work was undertaken without the communication of his deſign to any of his friends, and conſequently without any deſire of aſſiſtance from them; it was from the ſtores of his own mind alone that he hoped to be able to furniſh that variety of matter which it would require; which, that it might at no time fail him, he kept up by noting in a common-place book that he carried about him, ſuch incidents, ſentiments, and remarks on familiar life and manners as were for his purpoſe. This method of accumulat-

ing intelligence had been practiſed by Mr. Addiſon, and is humouroufly deſcribed in one of the Spectators, wherein he feigns to have dropped his paper of Notanda, conſiſting of a diverting medley of broken ſentences and looſe hints, which he tells us he had collected, and had meant to make uſe of. Much of the ſame kind is Johnſon's Adverſaria, as will appear by the following ſpecimens:

'HEREDIPETA born heir preſumptive to great 'fortune. — Had two unkles and an aunt. — Eldeſt 'un. ſquire and fox-hunter; other a ſea captain grown 'rich, — Mother a citizen's daughter. — Father an 'attorney, always told me of the riches to be gotten 'by pleaſing unk. — Made a ſycophant early — Hunted, found hares, caught fiſh, with the elder — aſked 'the other his adventures, foreign countries. Wiſhed 'I was bred to ſea — taken at word "no land lubber "ſhould" [have] "his money." Went to ſea. During 'voyage eldeſt fell in hunting died — Eſtate came 'to his brother — He married aunt's maid, the 'groſſneſs of his behaviour cutting off from equals. 'Only aunt remains — now haunted by a half pay 'officer, or officer of the guards, a young gentleman 'with a place at court, a rich widower without 'children, &c. — The time ſpent in which I ſhould 'have acquired the means of living — Folly of this 'kind of dependence — Every man ſhould live by 'his own powers. Flattery — ſlavery — defeated at 'length by footman — chambermaid — or peeviſhneſs 'or caprice of age. Ideas — hunting — cards — 'ſailing — ſailors fate any manſion. Thus from '3 fortunes uncertain of any, indeed diſabled from

'getting

'getting with credit or enjoying with dignity. Pa-
'rents folly who inſtead of animating children initiate
'them in ſervility. N.

Vive tibi, nam moriere tibi.

'Aunt a card-player—when not at hunting play'd at cards.'

In the above article we diſcern the rudiments of two moſt excellent papers, in the Rambler, number 197, and 198, the deſign whereof is to deſcribe and ridicule the folly of legacy-hunting.

Here follows another, in which is contained the hints from which he formed that humorous relation of a Journey in a Stage Coach, given in the Adventurer, Number 84.

'At Graveſend waiting for the coaches—Ad-
'ventures not of five hours but half one—Each
'entered the room with haughtineſs—Each ſat
'ſilent not with reverence but contempt—At laſt
'the red coat, what o'clock—Watch—not go
'well—coſt 40l.—Grave man calls for the news
'—Price of ſtocks, ſold out 40,000l. Red coat
'ſilent—Only one that eſcaped contempt, a young
'woman who wanted a ſervice, was going down
'and was very officious to ſerve the company. Red
'coat wondered at our ſilence, told us how much he
'loved to be on a level with his company.—1 Wo-
'man, hard for women of any condition to wait ſo
'long in public——informed that ſhe was a ſer-
'vant maid married to a trader. Another obſerved
'how frequently people of great figure were in ſuch

'places

'places in diſguiſe, and the pleaſure of ſometimes 'appearing below ourſelves.

'Jam vaga proſiliet frænis natura remotis.

'How hard (dixit quædam) for people uſed to 'their own coaches to ride in mixed company*.

* The collection above-mentioned contains alſo Johnſon's own opinions, ſentiments on ſeveral ſubjects, and among them the following on writers for bread, from whence we learn his genuine ſentiments of that profeſſion;

'Quid expedivit Pſittacus,

'Reaſons of writing, benevolence, deſire of fame, vanity, hunger, 'curioſity to know the rate of a man's own underſtanding. Which 'moſt juſtifiable. All may be forgiven if not perſiſted in, but 'writing for bread moſt, *Rich talk without excuſe*, Roſc. If write 'well, not leſs innocent or laudable than preſcribing — pleading— 'judging — fighting, tranſacting public affairs, much better than 'cringing, carrying a white ſtaff or voting. If ill, fails with 'leſs hazard to the public than others. The preſcriber— 'pleader — judge hurt others. He only bookſeller who will not 'venture much upon a new name. Controverſy ſuſpicious, if 'more to be got on one ſide yet argument the ſame.

'The greateſt writers have' [written] 'for bread — Homer— 'Shakeſpear — Dryden — Pope. Fatui non famæ — Degente de 'fatu et affame d'argent.

'Inconveniences of this life. To the public; the preſs is crowd- 'ed with many books, yet this may diffuſe knowledge, and leaves 'leſs room for vanity, ſometimes it may choak the way to letters, 'and hinder learning but rarely. To themſelves moſt inconven. 'ſeldom above want, endleſs labour, always a new work, ſub- 'ſcriptions ſolicited, ſhameleſs importunity, meanneſs, patrons 'and encouragers to be got, wretched obſequiouſneſs, companions 'of polite follies, vices, dedication, hateful flattery, ſtunted 'ambition or hope ſmall place, youth of labour, old age of 'dependence. Thi place often not got, Gav.

Being

Being thus ſtored with matter, Johnſon proceeded to publiſh his paper; and the firſt number came abroad on Tueſday the twentieth day of March, 1750.

It was the office of a cenſor of manners to curb the irregularities into which, in theſe new modes of living, the youthful of both ſexes were apt to fall, and this he endeavoured to effect by gentle exhortation, by ſober reproof, and, not ſeldom, by the powers of wit and ridicule; but with what ſucceſs, others are as well able to tell as myſelf; however, if that is to be judged of by the ſale of the paper, it was doubtleſs great, for though its reception was at firſt cool, and its progreſs ſlow, the world were too wiſe to ſuffer it to ſink into oblivion: it was collected into volumes, and it would be too much for any one to ſay, that ten impreſſions of twelve hundred and fifty each, of a book fraught with the ſoundeſt precepts of œconomical wiſdom, have been diſſeminated in vain.

On the firſt publication of the Rambler it met with a few readers who objected to it for certain particularities in the ſtyle, which they had not been uſed to in papers of the like kind, new and original combinations of words, ſentences of an unuſual form, and words derived from other languages, though accommodated to the genius of our own; but for theſe ſuch reaſons are aſſigned in the cloſe of the laſt paper, as not only are a defence of them, but ſhew them to be improvements of our language.

Of ſingularity it may be obſerved, that, in general, it is originality, and therefore not a defect, and that all is not tumidity which men of little and confined reading pleaſe to call ſo. It is from a ſervile

imitation of others, and the uſe of whole phraſes and ſentences, and cuſtomary combinations of words, that the variety of ſtyles is not nearly as great as that of faces. The vulgar opinion is, that the ſtyle of this century is the perfection of our language, and that we owe its ultimate and final improvement to Mr. Addiſon, and when we make his cold and languid periods the teſt, it is no wonder if we miſtake ſtrength and animation for tumidity.

And here I cannot but remark the error and misfortune of thoſe who are blind to the excellencies of ſtyle that occur in the works of many Engliſh proſe writers of the laſt century, which are rejected for no better a reaſon, than that in them we ſometimes meet with words not now in common uſe. A reader ignorant of the ſtate of our language at different periods, and not converſant with the writings of ages long paſt, is an incompetent judge of the ſubject, and his opinion of ſtyles of no weight or value. Such a one we may ſuppoſe hardly reſtrained from cenſuring the ſtyle of our liturgy, compiled for the moſt part ſo long ago as the reign of Edward the ſixth, and the antiquated phraſe of the ſtate-papers in the Cabala, the Burleigh, Sidney and Stratforde collections, notwithſtanding they ſeverally contain the moſt perfect models of precatory eloquence and civil negociation.

I find an opinion gaining ground not much to the advantage of Mr. Addiſon's ſtyle, the characteriſtics whereof are feebleneſs and inanity. I ſpeak of that alone, for his ſentiments are excellent and his humour exquiſite. In ſome inſtances he adopts vulgar phraſe, as when he calls an indiſcreet action *a piece* of folly, and too often uſes the expletive adverb *along*, thus,

Come

Come *along* with me. Yet I am not willing to deprive him of the honour implied in Johnſon's teſtimony, 'that his proſe is the model of the middle ſtyle;' but if he be but a mediocriſt, he is ſurely not a ſubject of imitation; it being a rule, that of examples the beſt are always to be ſelected.

That Johnſon owed his excellence as a writer to the divines and others of the laſt century, myſelf can atteſt, who have been the witneſs of his courſe of reading, and heard him declare his ſentiments of their works. Hooker he admired for his logical preciſion, Sanderſon for his accuteneſs, and Taylor for his amazing erudition; Sir Thomas Browne for his penetration, and Cowley for the eaſe and unaffected ſtructure of his periods. The tinſel of Sprat diſguſted him, and he could but juſt endure the ſmooth verboſity of Tillotſon. Hammond and Barrow he thought involved, and of the latter that he was unneceſſarily prolix.

It may perhaps be thought, as his literary acquaintance was extenſive, and the toil of compiling his dictionary very great, that Johnſon was helped in the publication of the Rambler by the communications of others; but this was not the fact, he forbore to ſolicit aſſiſtance, and few preſumed to offer it, ſo that in the whole ſeries of thoſe papers, we know with certainty of only four that were not of his own writing. Of theſe, No. 30, was ſent him by Mrs. Catherine Talbot, daughter of Mr. Edward Talbot herein before ſpoken of; No. 97, by Mr. Richardſon, the author of Clariſſa, and numbers 44 and 100, by Mrs. Elizabeth Carter of Deal, a lady to whoſe reputation for learning,

and

and the moſt eſtimable qualities of her ſex, no praiſe of mine can make any addition. Hence ariſes that uniformity of ſubject and ſentiment which diſtinguiſhes the Rambler from other papers of the like kind; but how great muſt its merit be, when wanting the charm of variety and that diverſity of characters, which, by the writers of them, was thought neceſſary to keep attention awake, it could ſupport itſelf to the end, and make inſtruction a ſubſtitute for amuſement! Nor can this defect, if it be any, be deemed a deviation from Johnſon's original purpoſe, which was not ſo much to inſtruct young perſons of both ſexes in the manners of the town, as in that more important ſcience, the conduct of human life; it being certain, that he had it in his power as well to delight as to inſtruct his readers; and this he has in ſome inſtances done, not only by the introduction of fictitious characters and fancied portraits, but by ironical ſarcaſms and original ſtrokes of wit and humour, that have, perhaps, excited more ſmiles than the writings of many, whoſe chief purpoſe it was, like that of L'Eſtrange and others, to make their readers merry.

And hence we may take occaſion to obſerve, the error of thoſe who diſtinguiſh ſo widely between men of ſtudy and reflection, and ſuch as are hackneyed in the ways of the world, as to ſuppoſe the latter only qualified to inſtruct us in the offices of life. Lord Cheſterfield, in his letters to his ſon, takes every occaſion to expreſs his hatred of an univerſity education, to brand it with pedantry, and to declare that it unfits a man for ſocial intercourſe. Some have aſſerted, that travelling is the only means to attain a knowledge

knowledge of mankind; and the captain in Swift, in a leſs extenſive view of human life, ſwears that

'To give a young gentleman right education,
'The army's the very beſt ſchool in the nation.'

To ſay the truth, there are numbers of men who contemn all knowledge derived from books, and prefer to it what they call turning over the great volume of the world. I had once a gardener that could not endure the mention of Miller's dictionary, and would contend with me, that 'practice was every thing;' and innumerable are the inſtances of men who oppoſe mother-wit to acquired intelligence, and had rather grope their way through the world, than be indebted for inſtruction to the reſearches of others. Such men as theſe, in ſituations they have not been accuſtomed to, are ever aukward and diffident; and it is for a reaſon nearly a-kin to this, that few rakes are able to look a modeſt woman in the face. On the contrary, the attainments of Johnſon were ſuch as, notwithſtanding his home-breeding, gave him confidence, and qualified him for the converſation of perſons of all ranks, conditions, characters, and profeſſions, ſo that no ſooner had the Rambler recommended itſelf to the favour of the public, and the author was known to be of eaſy acceſs, than his acquaintance was ſought, and even courted, by perſons, of whom many, with all the improvement of travel, and the refinements of court-manners, thought that ſomewhat worth knowing was to be learned from the converſation of a man, whoſe fortunes and courſe of life had precluded him from the like advantages.

Johnſon's talent for criticiſm, both preceptive and corrective, is now known and juſtly celebrated; and had he not diſplayed it in its utmoſt luſtre in his Lives of the Poets, we ſhould have lamented that he was ſo ſparing of it in the Rambler, which ſeemed to be a vehicle, of all others the moſt proper, for that kind of communication. An eulogium on Knolles's Hiſtory of the Turks, and a ſevere cenſure of the 'Samſon Agoniſtes' of Milton are the only critical eſſays there to be found; to the latter he ſeems to have been prompted by no better a motive, than that hatred of the author for his political principles which he is known to have entertained, and was ever ready to avow. What he has remarked of Milton in his Lives of the Poets is undoubtedly true: he was a political enthuſiaſt, and, as is evident from his panegyric on Cromwell, a baſe and abject flatterer. His ſtyle in controverſy was ſarcaſtic and bitter, and not conſiſtent with chriſtian charity; and though his apologiſts endeavour to defend him by the practice of the times, there were in his time better examplars than he choſe to follow, the writings of Jewel, Mede, Hooker, Dr. Jackſon, and others, his predeceſſors in religious and political controverſy; nor does he ſeem in his private character to have poſſeſſed many of thoſe qualities that moſt endear men to each other. His friends were few, Andrew Marvel, Marchmont Needham, and the younger Vane; and Cyriac Skinner, Harrington, Henry Nevil, John Aubrey, and others, members of that crack-brained aſſembly the Rota-club, all republicans; and there is reaſon to ſuſpect, from the ſternneſs of his temper, and the rigid diſcipline of his family,

family, that his domeſtic manners were far from amiable, and that he was neither a kind huſband nor an indulgent parent. But neither theſe nor thoſe other qualities that rendered him both a bitter enemy and a railing diſputant, could juſtify the ſeverity of Johnſon's criticiſm on the above-mentioned poem, nor apologize for that harſh and groundleſs cenſure which cloſes the firſt of his diſcourſes on it, that it is 'a tragedy which ignorance has admired, and bigotry 'applauded.'

The reflection on that enmity of Johnſon towards Milton, which I have above remarked, leads me to mention another inſtance of it, which about this time fell under my obſervation. A man of the name of Lauder, a native of Scotland, and educated in the univerſity of Edinburgh, had, for reaſons that will hereafter be given, conceived a hatred againſt the memory of Milton, and formed a ſcheme to convict him of plagiariſm, by ſhewing that he had inſerted in the Paradiſe Loſt whole paſſages taken from the writings of ſundry modern Latin poets, namely, Maſenius the jeſuit, Taubman a German profeſſor, the editor of Virgil, and joint editor with Gruter of Plautus, Staphorſtius a Dutch divine, and other writers leſs known; and of this crime he attempted to prove him guilty, by publiſhing inſtances in forged quotations, inſerted from time to time in the 'Gentleman's Magazine,' which not being detected, he made additions to, and again publiſhed in a volume intitled 'An Eſſay on Milton's uſe of and imitation of the moderns in his Paradiſe Loſt, dedicated to the Univerſities of Oxford and Cambridge, 8vo. 1750.' While the book was in the

preſs, the proof ſheets were ſubmitted to the inſpection of our club, by a member of it who had an intereſt in its publication, and I could all along obſerve that Johnſon ſeemed to approve, not only of the deſign but of the argument, and ſeemed to exult in a perſuaſion, that the reputation of Milton was likely to ſuffer by this diſcovery. That he was not privy to the impoſture I am well perſuaded, but that he wiſhed well to the argument muſt be inferred from the preface, which indubitably was written by Johnſon.

The charges of plagiariſm contained in this production, Lauder has attempted to make out by citations to a very great number, from a Latin poem of Jacobus Maſenius a jeſuit, intitled, 'Palæſtra ligatæ eloquentiæ,' from the 'Adamus exul' of Grotius, the 'Triumphus Pacis' of Caſpar Staphorſtius a Dutchman, from the Latin poems of Caſpar Barlæus, and the works of many other writers. For a time the world gave credit to them, and Milton's reputation was ſinking under them, till a clergyman of great worth, learning and induſtry, Mr. now Dr. John Douglas, prompted at firſt by mere curioſity, ſet himſelf to find out and compare the parallel paſſages, in the doing whereof he diſcovered, that in a quotation from Staphorſtius, Lauder had interpolated eight lines taken from a Latin tranſlation of the Paradiſe Loſt, by a man named Hogæus or Hog, and oppoſed them to the paſſage in the original, as evidence of Milton's plagiariſm. Proofs of the like fraud in paſſages cited from Taubman and many others are produced by Dr. Douglas; but a ſingle inſtance of the kind would have been ſufficient to blaſt the credit of his adverſary.

Having

Having made theſe diſcoveries, Dr. Douglas communicated them to the world in a pamphlet intitled, 'Milton vindicated from the charge of plagiariſm, 'brought againſt him by Mr. Lauder, &c. 8vo. '1750.' Upon the publication thereof his bookſellers called on Lauder for a juſtification of themſelves, and a confirmation of the charge; but he, with a degree of impudence not to be exceeded, acknowledged the interpolation of the books by him cited, and ſeemed to wonder at 'the folly of mankind in 'making ſuch a rout about eighteen or twenty lines.' However, being a ſhort time after convinced by Johnſon and others, that it would be more for his intereſt to make an ample confeſſion of his guilt, than to ſet mankind at defiance, and ſtigmatize them with folly; he did ſo in a letter addreſſed to Mr. Douglas, publiſhed in quarto, 1751, beginning thus:

'Candour and tenderneſs are in any relation, and 'on all occaſions, eminently amiable; but when they 'are found in an adverſary, and found ſo prevalent 'as to overpower that zeal which his cauſe excites, 'and that heat which naturally increaſes in the proſe-'cution of argument, and which may be in a great 'meaſure juſtified by the love of truth, they certainly 'appear with particular advantages; and it is im-'poſſible not to envy thoſe who poſſeſs the friendſhip 'of him, whom it is even ſome degree of good for-'tune to have known as an enemy.

'I will not ſo far diſſemble my weakneſs, or my 'fault, as not to confeſs, that my wiſh was to have 'paſſed undetected; but ſince it has been my fortune 'to fail in my original deſign, to have the ſuppoſitious

'paſſages which I have inſerted in my quotations 'made known to the world, and the ſhade which 'began to gather on the ſplendour of Milton totally 'diſperſed, I cannot but count it an allevation of my 'pain, that I have been defeated by a man who 'knows how to uſe advantages with ſo much mode-'ration, and can enjoy the honour of conqueſt with-'out the inſolence of triumph.

'It was one of the maxims of the Spartans, not to 'preſs upon a flying army, and therefore their enemies 'were always ready to quit the field, becauſe they 'knew the danger was only in oppoſing. The civi-'lity with which you have thought proper to treat 'me, when you had inconteſtable ſuperiority, has in-'clined me to make your victory complete, without any 'further ſtruggle, and not only publicly to acknowledge 'the truth of the charge which you have hitherto ad-'vanced, but to confeſs, without the leaſt diſſimula-'tion, ſubterfuge, or concealment, every other inter-'polation I have made in thoſe authors, which you 'have not yet had opportunity to examine.

'On the ſincerity and punctuality of this confeſſion, 'I am willing to depend for all the future regard of 'mankind, and cannot but indulge ſome hopes, that 'they whom my offence has alienated from me, may, 'by this inſtance of ingenuity and repentance, be pro-'pitiated and reconciled. Whatever be the event, I 'ſhall at leaſt have done all that can be done in re-'paration of my former injuries to Milton, to truth, 'and to mankind, and entreat that thoſe who ſhall 'continue implacable, will examine their own hearts, 'whether they have not committed equal crimes with-'out equal proofs of ſorrow, or equal acts of atonement.'

Then

Then follow the citations, ſome of which appear to be gratuitous, that is to ſay, ſuch as had eſcaped the detection of the author's adverſary.

He then proceeds to aſſign the motive for his attempt to ſubvert the reputation of Milton, in theſe words:

'About ten years ago, I publiſhed an edition of 'Dr. Johnſton's Tranſlation of the Pſalms, and having 'procured from the general aſſembly of the church 'of Scotland, a recommendation of its uſe to the 'lower claſſes of grammar-ſchools, into which I had 'begun to introduce it, though not without much 'controverſy and oppoſition, I thought it likely that 'I ſhould, by annual publications, improve my little 'fortune, and be enabled to ſupport myſelf in free-'dom from the miſeries of indigence. But Mr. Pope, 'in his malevolence to Mr. Benſon, who had diſtin-'guiſhed himſelf by his fondneſs for the ſame ver-'ſion, deſtroyed all my hopes by a diſtich*, in which 'he places Johnſton in a contemptuous compariſon 'with the author of Paradiſe Loſt.

'From this time, all my praiſes of Johnſton be-'came ridiculous, and I was cenſured with great 'freedom, for forcing upon the ſchools an author, 'whom Mr. Pope had mentioned only as a foil to a 'better poet. On this occaſion, it was natural not to 'be pleaſed, and my reſentment ſeeking to diſcharge 'itſelf ſomewhere, was unhappily directed againſt

* On two unequal crutches propt, he [Benſon] came,
Milton's on this, on that one Johnſton's name.
Dunciad, book iv. line 109.

'Milton. I reſolved to attack his fame, and found 'ſome paſſages in curſory reading, which gave me 'hopes of ſtigmatizing him as a plagiary. The far-'ther I carried my ſearch, the more eager I grew for 'the diſcovery, and the more my hypotheſis was op-'poſed, the more I was heated with rage. The con-'ſequence of my blind paſſion, I need not relate; 'it has, by your detection, become apparent to man-'kind. Nor do I mention this provocation as 'adequate to the fury which I have ſhewn, but 'as a cauſe of anger leſs ſhameful and reproachful 'than fractious malice, perſonal envy, or national 'jealouſy.'

The concluding paragraph of this confeſſion carries in it ſuch an appearance of contrition, that few who red it at the time could withhold that forgiveneſs which it implores; theſe are the words of it:

'For the violation of truth, I offer no excuſe, be-'cauſe I well know, that nothing can excuſe it. Nor 'will I aggravate my crime, by diſingenuous pallia-'tions. I confeſs it, I repent it, and reſolve, that my 'firſt offence ſhall be my laſt. More I cannot per-'form, and more therefore cannot be required. I 'intreat the pardon of all men, whom I have by any 'means induced to ſupport, to countenance, or pa-'tronize any frauds, of which I think myſelf obliged 'to declare, that not one of my friends was conſcious. 'I hope to deſerve by better conduct and more 'uſeful undertakings, that patronage which I have 'obtained from the moſt illuſtrious and venerable 'names by miſrepreſentation and deluſion, and to 'appear hereafter in ſuch a character, as ſhall give

'you

'you no reaſon to regret, that your name is frequently 'mentioned with that of,

'Reverend Sir,

'Your moſt humble ſervant,

'WILLIAM LAUDER.'

Notwithſtanding this humiliating and abject confeſſion, which, though it was penned by Johnſon*, was ſubſcribed by himſelf, Lauder had the impudence, in a poſtſcript thereto, in effect to retract it, by pretending that the deſign of his eſſay was only to try how deeply the prepoſſeſſion in favour of Milton was rooted in the minds of his admirers; and that the ſtratagem, as he calls it, was intended to impoſe only on a few obſtinate perſons; and, whether that was ſo criminal as it has been repreſented, he leaves the impartial mind to determine.

After the publication of this letter, the peruſers of it reſted in a conviction of the villainy of its author, ſtrengthened by the inconſiſtency between the reaſons aſſigned in that and thoſe in the poſtſcript. Nevertheleſs, in the year 1754, reſolving to attack Milton in another quarter, Lauder publiſhed a pamphlet intitled, 'King Charles I. vindicated from the charge of 'plagiariſm brought againſt him by Milton, and 'Milton himſelf convicted of forgery and a groſs 'impoſition on the public.' The deſign of this pamphlet was, to ingratiate himſelf with the friends to the memory of Charles by ſhewing, that the prayer of Pamela, in Sir Philip Sidney's Arcadia, was, by an artifice of Milton, inſerted in an edition of the Eikon Baſilike, with a view to fix on the king a charge of impiety.

* Vide infra, the account of a ſubſequent publication of Lauder's.

With

With this queſtion I meddle not; I have only to obſerve upon Lauder's pamphlet, that the argument is introduced by a defence of his eſſay, and an aſſertion, that his letter, which he ſays was written by Johnſon, in many reſpects contained not his ſentiments, and was, more properly than an apology, an enormous aggravation of his offence; and is purſued with a declaration of the author, in the ſincerity of his heart, that had not Milton with ſuch unparalleled malignity blaſted the king, he would not upon any conſideration have either offered a violence to truth, put an impoſition on the public, though but for a moment, or attempted to blaſt Milton's reputation by a falſhood.

Behold here a reaſon far differing from each of the two former; the firſt was a provocation given him by a diſtich of Mr. Pope's, the ſecond was a deſire by a ſtratagem, as he calls it, to try how far the partiality of Milton's admirers would lead them, and this laſt is, his reſentment of an injury done to the memory of king Charles the firſt. If we aſk, which of theſe is the true one? the anſwer muſt be, neither; for it appears that Lauder had projected an edition of Maſenius and other of the Latin poets referred to in his eſſay, and that in order to obtain ſubſcriptions for the ſame, he had been guilty of the wickedneſs imputed to and proved upon him.

The concluding paragraph of this laſt pamphlet of Lauder, as it is for its impudence matchleſs, I here give, and in the doing thereof conſign his memory to that infamy, which, by his complicated wickedneſs he has incurred.

'As

'As for his [Milton's] plagiariſms, I intend ſhortly, God willing, to extract ſuch genuine proofs from thoſe authors who held forth the lighted torch to Milton, I mean, who illuſtrated the ſubject of the Paradiſe Loſt, long before that prince of plagiaries entered upon it, as may be deemed ſufficient, not only to replace the few interpolations, (for which I have been ſo hideouſly exclaimed againſt) but even to reinforce the charge of plagiariſm againſt the Engliſh poet, and fix it upon him by irrefragable conviction in the face of the whole world, and by the ſuffrage of all candid and impartial judges, while ſun and moon ſhall endure, to the everlaſting ſhame and confuſion of the whole idolatrous rabble of his numerous partizans, particularly, my vain-glorious adverſary, who will reap only the goodly harveſt of diſappointment and diſgrace, where he expected to gather laurels.'

In 1756, Dr. Douglas publiſhed a new edition of is pamphlet, with the title of 'Milton no plagiary, or a detection of the forgeries contained in Lauder's eſſay on the imitations of the moderns in the Paradiſe Loſt:' to this is an appendix, containing part of an pology of Lauder's bookſellers, for having been the ubliſhers of his eſſay, in which they give an account f their conduct, after the firſt diſcovery of his villainy, i the following words: 'An immediate application to Lauder was neceſſary, as well to juſtify ourſelves, as to remove or confirm the charge. Accordingly, we acquainted him, that if he did not inſtantly put into our hands the books from which he had taken the principal paſſages, we would publicly diſclaim

'all

'all connexion with him, and expoſe his declining 'the only ſtep left for his defence. This declaration 'brought him to us the following day, when, with 'great confidence, he acknowledged the interpolation 'of all the books; and ſeemed to wonder at mankind 'in making ſuch a rout about eighteen or twenty 'lines. As this man then has been guilty of ſuch 'a wicked impoſition upon us, our friends, and the 'public, and is capable of ſo daring an avowal of it, 'we declare, that we will have no farther intercourſe 'with him, and that we now ſell his book only as a 'curioſity of fraud and interpolation, which all the 'ages of literature cannot parallel!'

With a character thus blaſted, it was next to impoſſible for this man to continue in England; he therefore left it, and went to ſettle at Barbadoes, propoſing to ſet up a ſchool there; but, upon his arrival on the iſland, he met with ſmall encouragement, and is ſaid to have died about the year 1771.

As Johnſon, though not in the leaſt an acceſſary to the impoſture above related, had a conſiderable ſhare in the controverſy that it gave riſe to, it ſeemed to me neceſſary to be thus particular in giving ſuch an account thereof as would concentrate into one point all that was written on the ſubject, and convey to poſterity the hiſtory of a tranſaction, the like whereof is not to be found among the records of literature. It is too ſad a truth, that learning and rectitude of mind are qualities independent of each other, and that the world has in all ages abounded with examples of men of great erudition who have been wanting in common honeſty. We read of men who have corrupted

rupted the Holy Scriptures with a view to favour a particular hereſy; and of monks who have forged charters to promote the ſecular intereſts of their fraternity: theſe, though wicked actions, muſt be ſuppoſed to have ſprung from a principle, which, having for its object a common benefit, had ſomewhat of generoſity in it: but the motives of this impoſtor were all of the ſelfiſh kind, revenge for a ſuppoſed injury done to himſelf, and an impatience to be relieved from his own peculiar and perſonal wants and diſtreſſes; and though it was for ſome time thought that his confeſſion had atoned for his offence, we find it was in fact an aggravation of it: In as much as it was not ſincere, it was a repentance to be repented of; and indeed in one ſenſe he ſeems to have thought ſo, for, in his laſt publication, he retracts it, and that nothing might be wanting to fill up the meaſure of his iniquity, he defies his detector, whoſe endeavours were to beget in him that ſenſe of ſhame which, as it is ever the forerunner of penitence, has ever been deemed ſalutary.

Great thanks are due to this learned divine and eminent ſcholar for the zeal and induſtry manifeſted by him in the courſe of this ſingular controverſy, and every judicious reader muſt rejoice, that through his means our great poet has been reſcued from an infamous charge, and that we may yet read the 'Paradiſe Loſt' without a ſuſpicion of its originality.

To return to Johnſon, I have already ſaid that he paid no regard to time or the ſtated hours of refection, or even reſt; and of this his inattention I will here relate a notable inſtance. Mrs. Lenox, a lady now well known

in

in the literary world, had written a novel intitled, 'The 'life of Harriot Stuart,' which in the ſpring of 1751, was ready for publication. One evening at the club, Johnſon propoſed to us the celebrating the birth of Mrs. Lenox's firſt literary child, as he called her book, by a whole night ſpent in feſtivity. Upon his mentioning it to me, I told him I had never ſat up a whole night in my life; but he continuing to preſs me, and ſaying, that I ſhould find great delight in it, I, as did all the reſt of our company, conſented. The place appointed was the Devil tavern, and there, about the hour of eight, Mrs. Lenox and her huſband, and a lady of her acquaintance, now living, as alſo the club, and friends to the number of near twenty, aſſembled. Our ſupper was elegant, and Johnſon had directed that a magnificent hot apple-pye ſhould make a part of it, and this he would have ſtuck with bay-leaves, becauſe, forſooth, Mrs. Lenox was an authoreſs, and had written verſes; and further, he had prepared for her a crown of laurel, with which, but not till he had invoked the muſes by ſome ceremonies of his own invention, he encircled her brows. The night paſſed, as muſt be imagined, in pleaſant converſation, and harmleſs mirth, interningled at different periods with the refreſhments of coffee and tea. About five, Johnſon's face ſhone with meridian ſplendour, though his drink had been only lemonade; but the far greater part of us had deſerted the colours of Bacchus, and were with difficulty rallied to partake of a ſecond refreſhment of coffee, which was ſcarcely ended when the day began to dawn. This phenomenon began to put us in mind of our reckoning; but

but the waiters were all ſo overcome with ſleep, that it was two hours before we could get a bill, and it was not till near eight that the creaking of the ſtreet-door gave the ſignal for our departure.

My mirth had been conſiderably abated by a ſevere fit of the tooth-ach, which had troubled me the greater part of the night, and which Bathurſt endeavoured to alleviate by all the topical remedies and palliatives he could think of; and I well remember, at the inſtant of my going out of the tavern-door, the ſenſation of ſhame that affected me, occaſioned not by reflection on any thing evil that had paſſed in the courſe of the night's entertainment, but on the reſemblance it bore to a debauch. However, a few turns in the Temple, and a breakfaſt at a neighbouring coffee-houſe, enabled me to overcome it.

In the foregoing pages I have aſſigned the motives that induced Johnſon to the inſtitution of the club, and the writing of the Rambler; and here I may add, that his view in both was ſo far anſwered, as that the amuſements they afforded him contributed, not only to relieve him from the fatigue of his great work the dictionary, but that they ſerved to divert that melancholy, which the public now too well knows was the diſeaſe of his mind. For this morbid affection, as he was uſed to call it, no cauſe can be aſſigned; nor will it gratify curioſity to ſay, it was conſtitutional, or that it diſcovered itſelf in his early youth, and haunted him in his hours of recreation; and it is but a ſurmiſe that it might be a latent concomitant of that diſeaſe, which, in his infancy, had induced his mother to ſeek relief from the royal touch. His

own

own conjecture was, that he derived it from his father, of whom he was uſed to ſpeak as of a man in whoſe temper and character melancholy was predominant. Under this perſuaſion, he at the age of about twenty, drew up a ſtate of his caſe for the opinion of an eminent phyſician in Staffordſhire, and from him received an anſwer, 'that from the ſymptoms 'therein deſcribed, he could think nothing better 'of his diſorder, than that it had a tendency to in-'ſanity; and without great care might poſſibly ter-'minate in the deprivation of his rational faculties.' The dread of ſo great a calamity was one inducement with him to abſtain from wine at certain periods of his life, when his fears in this reſpect were greateſt; but it was not without ſome reluctance that he did it, for he has often been heard to declare, that wine was to him ſo great a cordial, that it required all his reſolution to reſiſt the temptations to ebriety.

It was fortunate for the public, that during a period of two years, the depreſſion of his mind was at no time ſo great as to incapacitate him for ſending forth a number of the Rambler on the days on which it became due; nor did any of the eſſays or diſcourſes therein contained, either in the choice of ſubjects or the manner of treating them, indicate the leaſt ſymptom of drooping faculties or laſſitude of ſpirit. Nevertheleſs, whether the conſtant meditation on ſuch topics as moſt frequently occur therein, had not produced in his mind a train of ideas that were now become uneaſy to him, or whether, that intenſeneſs of thought which he muſt have exerted, firſt, in the conception, and next, in the delivery of ſuch original

original and noble ſentiments as theſe papers abound with, had not made the relaxation of his mind neceſſary, he thought proper to diſcontinue the Rambler at a time when its reputation was but in its dawn.

The paper in which this his reſolution is announced, is that of March 14, 1752, which concludes the work. As he had given his readers no warning of his intention, they were unprepared for the ſhock, and had the mortification to receive the tidings and the blow at the ſame inſtant, with the aggravation of a ſympathetic melancholy, excited by the mournful expreſſions with which he takes his leave. And though he affects to think the reaſons for diſcontinuing the publication a ſecret to his readers, it is but too apparent that it was written in the hours of dejection, and that the want of aſſiſtance and encouragement was not the weakeſt of his motives. Of the former of theſe two he had ſurely no right to complain, for he was ſo far from being ever known to wiſh for aſſiſtance, that his moſt intimate friends ſeemed to think it would have been preſumption to offer it. The want of encouragement indeed might be a juſtifiable cauſe of diſcontent, for I have reaſon to think that the number of papers taken off hardly amounted to five hundred on any of the days of publication. Nevertheleſs, the ſlow circulation of the paper was to be accounted for by other reaſons than that the author was never a favourite with the public, a reflection that would have been but excuſable, had his imitations of Juvenal become waſte paper, or his Irene, inſtead of being ſuffered to run nine nights, been conſigned to oblivion on the firſt;

for it muſt be conſidered, that the merits of the Rambler were of a kind not likely to recommend it to thoſe who read chiefly for amuſement, and of readers, this claſs will ever be by much the moſt numerous: the ſubjects therein diſcuſſed are chiefly the weightieſt and moſt important, reſpecting more our eternal than temporal happineſs; and that theſe were the obſtacles to the progreſs of his paper, himſelf has unawares confeſſed in his apology for the conduct of it. 'I 'have never,' ſays he, 'complied with temporary 'curioſity, nor enabled my readers to diſcuſs the 'topic of the day. I have rarely exemplified my 'aſſertions by living characters; in my papers no 'man could look for cenſures of his enemies or praiſes 'of himſelf; and they only were expected to peruſe 'them, whoſe paſſions left them leiſure for abſtracted 'truth, and whom virtue could pleaſe by its naked 'dignity.'

Towards the cloſe of this laſt paper, he ſeems to refer to 'the final ſentence of mankind,' with a ſort of preſage, that one more deliberate than that to which he was ſubmitting might be more favourable to his labours. He little thought at this time to what length the juſtice of mankind would go; that he ſhould be a witneſs to the publication of the tenth edition of the Rambler, or that his heart would ever be dilated, as his friends can teſtify it was, with the news of its being tranſlated into the Ruſſian language.

Much might be ſaid in commendation of this excellent work; but ſuch ſuffrages as thoſe here mentioned ſet it almoſt above praiſe. In the author's own opinion

opinion it was leſs eſtimable than in that of his judges: ſome merit indeed he claims for having enriched his native language, but in terms ſo very elegant and modeſt, that they at once hold forth an exemplar, and convey an apology. 'I have laboured,' ſays he, 'to 'refine our language to grammar and purity, and 'to clear it from colloquial barbariſms, licentious 'idioms, and irregular combinations. Something 'perhaps I have added to the elegance of its con-'ſtruction, and ſomething to the harmony of its 'cadence. When common words were leſs pleaſing 'to the ear, or leſs diſtinct in their ſignification, I 'have familiarized the terms of philoſophy by apply-'ing them to popular ideas, but have rarely admitted 'any word not authorized by former writers.'—With what ſucceſs theſe endeavours of his have been attended is beſt known to thoſe who have made eloquence their ſtudy; and it may go far towards the ſtamping a laſting character of purity, elegance, and ſtrength on the ſtyle of Johnſon, to ſay, that ſome of the moſt popular orators of this country now living, have not only propoſed it to themſelves as a model for ſpeaking, but for the purpoſe of acquiring the cadence and flow of his periods, have actually gotten whole eſſays from the Rambler by heart.

The concluding paragraph of his farewel paper is ſo very awful, that I cannot reſiſt the temptation to inſert it, and the rather for that it ſeems to have been written under a perſuaſion, that Almighty God had been propitious to his labour, and that the ſolemn addreſs to him which he had compoſed and offered up, on occaſion of his engaging in it, had been heard, and was likely to be accepted.

'The eſſays profeſſedly ſerious, if I have been able 'to execute my own intentions, will be found ex- 'actly conformable to the precepts of Chriſtianity, 'without any accommodation to the licentiouſneſs 'and levity of the preſent age. I therefore look 'back on this part of my work with pleaſure, which 'no praiſe of man ſhall diminiſh or augment. I 'ſhall never envy the honours which wit and learn- 'ing obtain in any other cauſe, if I can be num- 'bered among the writers who have given ardour 'to virtue, and confidence to truth:

'Celeſtial pow'rs! that piety regard,
'From you my labours wait their laſt reward.'

The Rambler, thus publiſhed in numbers, was not ſuffered to be loſt to the world, or to ſink into oblivion. As ſoon as, by the concluſion of it, it became a complete work, it was collected into volumes, and printed in Scotland *, and, ſoon after, alſo here, and obtained ſuch favour with the public, as was an inducement with Dr. Hawkeſworth to an undertaking of the ſame kind, the publication of a periodical paper called 'The Adventurer.' For the carrying on ſuch a work as this, Hawkeſworth, though he poſſeſſed but a ſmall ſtock of learning, was more than meanly qualified. He had excellent natural parts, and, by reading the modern Engliſh and French authors, had acquired a ſtyle, which, by his acquaintance with Johnſon he had improved into a very good one. He wrote verſes, that is to ſay in Engliſh, with eaſe

* In this edition a tranſlation of the mottos by Mr. Elphinſton is given.

and fluency, and was better acquainted with the world than moſt men are who have been bred to no profeſſion.

The ſubjects of theſe papers, like thoſe of the Rambler, are human life and manners, with a mixture of humour and inſtructive pleaſantry, criticiſm, and moral and religious exhortation, too various, it muſt be ſuppoſed, for the powers of a ſingle perſon: they are therefore the produce of different pens, and may owe their merit, in a great meaſure, to that diverſity. The curioſity of the reader is, to a ſmall degree, gratified by the laſt paper, which aſſigns to their author, Dr. Joſeph Warton, ſuch as have a certain ſignature, and leaves to Dr. Hawkeſworth himſelf the praiſe of ſuch as are without any. To the information there given, I add, that the papers marked A. which are ſaid to have come from a ſource that ſoon failed, were ſupplied by Dr. Bathurſt, an original aſſociate in the work, and thoſe diſtinguiſhed by the letter T. by Johnſon*.

The firſt number of the Adventurer made its appearance on Tueſday, November 7, 1752, and on that week-day, and alſo on Saturdays, it continued to be publiſhed, till the ninth of March 1754. To point out the many excellent eſſays contained in it is needleſs, as they are now collected into volumes, and together with the Rambler form a ſyſtem of moral and œconomical inſtitution; two of them are to be looked on as curioſities in different ways, Dr. Warton's remarks on 'King Lear' and 'the Tempeſt,' the moſt

* That Johnſon was the writer of the papers ſigned T, I aſſert on the authority of his Adverſaria, in which are the original hints of many of them in his own hand-writing.

learned and judicious critiques in the Engliſh language, and the account of a native of Scotland, called Admirable Crichton, dictated from memory by Johnſon to Hawkeſworth.

As Johnſon expected to be believed whenever he either ſpoke or wrote, he has not vouchſafed to cite any authority for the incredible relation, which the Adventurer contains, of the perſonal and mental endowments of a man who is deſcribed as a monſter both of erudition and proweſs, and in every other view of his character is repreſented as having paſſed the limits of humanity. That he had no authority for what he has related of him, would be too much to ſay, after he has aſſerted, that he had ſuch as was inconteſtible, yet having that, he has kept within the bounds of it, and caſt a veil over that blaze of glory, which, to gaze on in its naked ſplendour, would not dazzle but blind the beholder.

Johnſon's account, for his I muſt call it for a reaſon above given, is in theſe words:

'Among the favourites of nature, that have from 'time to time appeared in the world, enriched with 'various endowments and contrarieties of excellence, 'none ſeems to have been more exalted above the 'common rate of humanity, than the man known 'about two centuries ago by the appellation of the 'Admirable Crichton; of whoſe hiſtory, whatever 'we may ſuppreſs as ſurpaſſing credibility, yet we 'ſhall, upon inconteſtable authority, relate enough to 'rank him among prodigies.

"Virtue," ſays Virgil, "is better accepted when "it comes in a pleaſing form:" the perſon of Crich-'ton was eminently beautiful; but his beauty was

'conſiſtent

'conſiſtent with ſuch activity and ſtrength, that in 'fencing, he would ſpring at one bound the length 'of twenty feet upon his antagoniſt; and he uſed 'his ſword in either hand with ſuch force and dex-'terity, that ſcarce any one had courage to engage 'him.

'Having ſtudied at St. Andrew's in Scotland, he 'went to Paris in his twenty-firſt year, and affixed 'on the gate of the college of Navarre a kind of 'challenge to the learned of that univerſity, to diſ-'pute with him on a certain day; offering to his 'opponents, whoever they ſhould be, the choice of 'ten languages, and of all the faculties and ſciences. 'On the day appointed, three thouſand auditors 'aſſembled, when four doctors of the church and 'fifty maſters appeared againſt him; and one of his 'antagoniſts confeſſes, that the doctors were de-'feated, that he gave proofs of knowledge above 'the reach of man, and that a hundred years paſſ-'ed without food or ſleep, would not be ſufficient 'for the attainment of his learning. After a diſ-'putation of nine hours, he was preſented by the 'preſident and profeſſors with a diamond and a 'purſe of gold, and diſmiſſed with repeated accla-'mations.

'From Paris he went away to Rome, where he 'made the ſame challenge, and had, in the preſence 'of the pope and cardinals, the ſame ſucceſs. After-'wards he contracted at Venice an acquaintance with 'Aldus Manutius, by whom he was introduced to the 'learned of that city; then viſited Padua, where he 'engaged in another public diſputation, beginning

'his performance with an extemporal poem in praiſe 'of the city and the aſſembly then preſent, and con- 'cluding with an oration equally unpremeditated in 'commendation of ignorance.

'He afterwards publiſhed another challenge, in 'which he declared himſelf ready to detect the errors 'of Ariſtotle and all his commentators, either in the 'common forms of logic, or in any which his anta- 'goniſts ſhould propoſe of a hundred different kinds 'of verſe.

'Theſe acquiſitions of learning, however ſtupen- 'dous, were not gained at the expence of any pleaſure 'which youth generally indulges, or by the omiſſion 'of any accompliſhment in which it becomes a gen- 'tleman to excel: he practiſed, in great perfection, the 'arts of drawing and painting; he was an eminent 'performer in both vocal and inſtrumental muſic; 'he danced with uncommon gracefulneſs; and on 'the day after his diſputation at Paris, exhibited his 'ſkill in horſemanſhip before the court of France, 'where, at a public match of tilting, he bore away 'the ring upon his lance fifteen times toge- 'ther.

'He excelled likewiſe in domeſtic games of leſs 'dignity and reputation; and in the interval be- 'tween his challenge and diſputation at Paris, he 'ſpent ſo much of his time at cards, dice, and tennis, 'that a lampoon was fixed upon the gate of the 'Sorbonne, directing thoſe that would ſee this 'monſter of erudition, to look for him at the 'tavern.

'So extenſive was his acquaintance with life and 'manners, that in an Italian comedy, compoſed by 'himſelf,

'himſelf, and exhibited before the court of Mantua, 'he is ſaid to have perſonated fifteen different cha- 'racters; in all which he might ſucceed without 'great difficulty, ſince he had ſuch power of reten- 'tion, that once hearing an oration of an hour, he 'would repeat it exactly, and in the recital follow 'the ſpeaker through all his variety of tone and ges- 'ticulation.

'Nor was his ſkill in arms leſs than in learning, 'or his courage inferior to his ſkill: there was a 'prize-fighter in Mantua, who travelling about the 'world, according to the barbarous cuſtom of that 'age, as a general challenger, had defeated the moſt 'celebrated maſters in many parts of Europe; and 'in Mantua, where he then reſided, had killed three 'that appeared againſt him. The duke repented that 'he had granted him his protection; when Crichton, 'looking on his ſanguinary ſucceſs with indignation, 'offered to ſtake fifteen hundred piſtoles, and mount 'the ſtage againſt him. The duke, with ſome re- 'luctance, conſented, and, on the day fixed, the com- 'batants appeared: their weapons ſeem to have 'been ſingle rapier, which was then newly intro- 'duced in Italy. The prize-fighter advanced with 'great violence and fierceneſs, and Crichton con- 'tented himſelf calmly to ward his paſſes, and ſuffered 'him to exhauſt his vigour by his own fury: Crichton 'then became the aſſailant; and preſſed upon him 'with ſuch force and agility, that he thruſt him 'thrice through the body, and ſaw him expire: he 'then divided the prize he had won, among the 'widows whoſe huſbands had been killed.

'The

'The death of this wonderful man I ſhould be 'willing to conceal, did I not know that every rea- 'der will enquire curiouſly after that fatal hour, 'which is common to all human beings, however 'diſtinguiſhed from each other by nature or by 'fortune.

'The duke of Mantua having received ſo many 'proofs of his various merit, made him tutor to his 'ſon Vincentio di Gonzaga, a prince of looſe man- 'ners and turbulent diſpoſition. On this occaſion it 'was, that he compoſed the comedy in which he ex- 'hibited ſo many different characters with exact 'propriety. But his honour was of ſhort continuance, 'for as he was one night in the time of Carnival 'rambling about the ſtreets with his guitar in his 'hand, he was attacked by ſix men maſked. Nei- 'ther his courage nor ſkill, in this exigence deſerted 'him: he oppoſed them with ſuch activity and ſpirit, 'that he ſoon diſperſed them, and diſarmed their 'leader, who throwing off his maſk, diſcovered him- 'ſelf to be the prince his pupil. Crichton falling 'on his knees, took his own ſword by the point, and 'preſented it to the prince, who immediately ſeized 'it, and inſtigated, as ſome ſay, by jealouſy, accord- 'ing to others, only by drunken fury and brutal re- 'ſentment, thruſt him through the heart.

'Thus was the Admirable Crichton brought into 'that ſtate, in which he could excel the meaneſt 'of mankind only by a few empty honours paid to 'his memory: the court of Mantua teſtified their 'eſteem by a public mourning; the contemporary 'wits were profuſe of their encomiums; and the

'palaces of Italy were adorned with pictures repre-
'ſenting him on horſeback, with a lance in one hand
'and a book in the other.'

The above account is ſo defective in the evidences of hiſtorical verity, that it has been by ſome ſuſpected to be fabulous. It is true, that in eſſays of ſuch a kind as that which contains this eulogium, it is not uſual, for that would be to incur the charge of pedantry, to cite authorities; nevertheleſs, the circumſtances of time and place ſeem ſo neceſſary in the relation of every uncommon event, and in the deſcription of every extraordinary perſon, that the omiſſion of both in this inſtance, as alſo the chriſtian name of the perſon celebrated, can hardly be excuſed.

To ſupply theſe defects I might refer the reader to authorities, that fix the place of his birth at Clunie in the ſhire of Perth in Scotland, the year thereof at 1551, and that of his death 1583; and that tell us alſo, that Crichton's name of baptiſm was James; and as to the facts enumerated in the Adventurer, they ſeem to be ſufficiently authenticated to all the purpoſes of hiſtorical information, in a book written in 1652, by Sir Thomas Urquhart*, bearing this ſtrange

* This ſingular perſon, whoſe name is ſometimes written Urchard, was a phyſician of the houſe of Cromarty in Scotland, a man of learning, and the firſt tranſlator into Engliſh of the works of Rabelais. In the time of the rebellion in Scotland, Temp. Car. 1. he was a fierce opponent of the preſbyterian eſtabliſhment, and taking, as we may ſuppoſe, an active part againſt it, was made a priſoner of war, and though enlarged on his parole, endured many hardſhips. Beſides the book above-mentioned, he wrote ſundry tracts, which have lately been collected and publiſhed in one volume

ſtrange title, 'ΕΚΣΚΥΒΑΛΑΥΡΟΝ, or the diſcovery 'of a moſt exquiſite jewel more precious than dia-'monds inchaſed in gold, the like whereof was never 'ſeen in any age; found in the kennel of Worceſter-'ſtreets, the day after the fight, and ſix before the 'autumnal equinox 1651.'

In this book is contained a memorial of ſundry illuſtrious perſons of Scotland, ſerving to vindicate the honour of that nation, but written in ſuch a ſtyle of learned tumidity and bombaſt, as is not to be paralleled in any book now extant. I here cite from it two paſſages reſpecting Crichton as ſpecimens thereof, and as proofs of Johnſon's diſcretion in veiling the effulgence of a character too bright to be viewed in its genuine luſtre.

'It happening on a Shrove-Tueſday at night, that 'this ever-renowned *Crichtoun*, (who, in the after-'noon

lume octavo, one whereof is intitled, 'The true pedigree and 'lineal deſcent of the moſt ancient and honourable family of 'Urquhart in the houſe of Cromarty, from the creation of the 'world till the year 1652,' in which we are not more aſtoniſhed to meet with a long ſucceſſion of names, for the moſt part purely Greek, than to find ſuch minute particulars recorded, as neither hiſtory nor tradition was ever before known to obtrude upon poſterity.

For inſtance, ſpeaking of one of his anceſtors named Eſormun, who he ſays lived A. M. 810, and married Narſeſia; he tells this moſt incredible tale: 'He was ſovereign prince of Achaia. For 'his fortune in the war, and affability in converſation, his ſubjects 'and familiars ſurnamed him [illegible], that is, fortunate and well-'beloved. After which time, his poſterity ever ſince hath ac-'knowledged him the father of all that carry the name of URQU-'HART. He had for his arms three banners, three ſhips, and 'three

'noon of that day, at the deſire of my lord duke '(the whole court ſtriving which ſhould exceed 'other in foolery, and deviſing of the beſt ſports to 'excite laughter; neither my lord, ducheſs, nor prince, 'being exempted from acting their parts, as well as 'they could) upon a theatre ſet up for the purpoſe, 'begun to prank it (*à la Venetiana*) with ſuch a flou-'riſh of *mimick*, and *ethopoetick* geſtures, that all 'the courtiers of both ſexes, even thoſe that a little 'before that, were fondeſt of their own conceits, 'at the ſight of his ſo inimitable a garb, from raviſh-'ing actors, that they were before, turned then ra-'viſhed ſpectators. O! with how great livelineſs did 'he repreſent the conditions of all manner of men! 'how naturally did he ſet before the eyes of the be-'holders the rogueries of all profeſſions, from the 'overweening *monarch* to the peeviſh *ſwaine*, through 'all intermediate degrees of the ſuperficial *courtier* 'or proud *warrior*, diſſembled *churchman*, doting *old*

'three ladies, in a field *Or*, with the picture of a young lady above 'the waiſt, holding in her right hand a brandiſhed ſword, and a 'branch of myrtle in her left for the creſt; and for ſupporters, 'two javanetes, after the ſoldier habit of Achaia, with this motto 'in the ſcrole of his coat-armour, Ταῦτα ἡ τρία ἀξιοθιάτα:---that 'is, theſe three are worthy to behold. Upon his wife Narſeſia, 'who was ſovereign of the Amazons, he begot Cratynter.' Of Litoborus, another pretended anceſtor of the Urquhart family, who lived A. M. 1930, he ſays, he married two wives, Paſena and Emphaneola; and adds, 'yet had he, beſides theſe two ladies, ſeve-'ral others, both wives and concubines, as the faſhion was over 'the whole world for the ſpace of above a thouſand years there-'after.' And of Phrenedon, another, who lived about ſixty years after, he roundly aſſerts, 'that he was in the houſe of the patriarch 'Abraham, at the time of the deſtruction of Sodom and Go-'morrah.'

'man,

'*man*, cozening *lawyer*, lying *traveler*, covetous '*merchant*, rude *ſeaman*, pedantick *ſcolar*, the amou-'rous *ſhepheard*, envious *artiſan*, vainglorious *maſter*, 'and tricky *ſervant*; he did with ſuch variety diſplay 'the ſeveral humours of all theſe ſorts of people, and 'with a ſo bewitching energy, that he ſeemed to be 'the *original*, they the *counterfeit*; and they the re-'*ſemblance* whereof he was the *prototype*: he had all 'the jeers, ſquibs, flouts, buls, quips, taunts, whims, 'jeſts, clinches, gybes, mokes, jerks, with all the 'ſeveral kinds of equivocations, and other ſophiſtical 'captions, that could properly be adapted to the 'perſon by whoſe repreſentation he intended to in-'veagle the company into a fit of mirth, and would 'keep in that miſcelany diſcourſe of his (which was all 'for the ſplene, and nothing for the gall) ſuch a cli-'macterical and mercurially digeſted method, that 'when the fancy of the hearers was tickled with any 'conceit, and that the jovial blood was moved, he 'held it going, with another new device upon the 'back of the firſt, and another, yet another, and ano-'ther againe, ſucceeding one another, for the pro-'moval of what is a ſtirring into a higher agitation, 'till in the cloſure of the luxuriant period, the *deca-'manal* wave of the oddeſt whimſy of al, enforced 'the charmed ſpirits of the auditory, (for affording 'room to its apprehenſion) ſuddenly to burſt forth 'into a laughter; which commonly laſted juſt ſo long 'as he had leaſure to withdraw behind the ſkreen, 'ſhift off with the help of a page, the ſuite he had 'on, apparel himſelf with another, and return to the 'ſtage to act afreſh; for by that time their tranſported, 'diſparpled, and ſublimated fancies, by the wonder-

'fully

'fully operating engines of his ſolacious inventions, 'had from the hight to which the inward ſcrues, 'wheeles, and pullies of his wit had elevated them, 'deſcended by degrees into their wonted ſtations, 'he was ready for the perſonating of another carriage; 'whereof, to the number of fourteen ſeveral kinds, '(during the five hours ſpace, that at the dukes 'deſire, the ſollicitation of the court, and his own 'recreation, he was pleaſed to hiſtrionize it) he ſhewed 'himſelf ſo natural a repreſentative, that any would 'have thought he had been ſo many ſeveral actors, 'differing in all things elſe, ſave only the ſtature of 'the body; With this advantage above the moſt of 'other actors, whoſe tongue, with its *oral* implements, 'is the onely inſtrument of their minds diſcloſing, 'that, beſides his mouth with its appurtenances, he 'lodged almoſt a ſeveral oratour in every member of 'his body; his head, his eyes, his ſhoulders, armes, 'hands, fingers, thighs, legs, feet, and breaſt, being 'able to decipher any paſſion, whoſe character he 'purpoſed to give.

'Firſt, he did preſent himſelf with a crown on his 'head, a ſcepter in his hand, being clothed in a pur-'ple robe furred with ermyne; after that, with a 'miter on his head, a croſier in his hand, and ac-'coutred with a paire of lawn-ſleeves: and thereafter, 'with a helmet on his head, the viſiere up, a com-'manding-ſtick in his hand, and arrayed in a buff-'ſuit, with a ſcarf about his middle. then, in a rich 'apparel, after the neweſt faſhion, did he ſhew him-'ſelf, (like another *Sejanus*) with a periwig daubed 'with Cypres powder: in ſequel of that, he came 'out with a three corner'd cap on his head, ſome

'parchments

' parchments in his hand, and writings hanging at ' his girdle like chancery bills; and next to that, with ' a furred gown about him, an ingot of gold in his ' hand, and a bag full of money by his-ſide; after all ' this, he appeares againe clad in a country-jacket, ' with a prong in his hand, and a *Monmouth*-like-cap ' on his head: then very ſhortly after, with a pal- ' mer's coat upon him, a bourdon * in his hand, and ' ſome few cockle-ſhels ſtuck to his hat, he look't as ' if he had come in pilgrimage from *Saint Michael*; ' immediatly after that, he domineers it in a bare ' unlined gowne, with a pair of whips in the one hand, ' and *Corderius* in the other: and in ſuite thereof, ' he *honderſpondered* † it with a pair of pannier-like ' breeches, a Mountera-cap on his head, and a knife ' in a wooden ſheath, dagger ways, by his ſide; about ' the latter end he comes forth again with a ſquare ' in one hand, a rule in the other, and a leather apron ' before him: then very quickly after, with a ſcrip ' by his ſide, a ſheep hook in his hand, and a baſket ' full of flowers to make noſegays for his miſtris: ' now drawing to a cloſure, he rants it firſt in *cuerpo*, ' and vapouring it with gingling ſpurrs, and his armes ' a kenbol like a *Don Diego* he ſtrouts it, and by ' the loftineſs of his gate plaies the *Capitan Spa-* ' *vento*: then in the very twinkling of an eye, you ' would have ſeen him againe iſſue forth with a ' cloak upon his arm, in a livery garment, thereby ' repreſenting the ſerving-man; and laſtly, at one

* A muſical inſtrument reſembling a baſſoon, ſerving alſo for a walking-ſtaff, in uſe with the pilgrims who viſit the body of St. James at Compoſtella. Gen. Hiſt. of the Science and Practice of Muſic, vol. iv. 139.

† For this ſtrange word no meaning can be found.

' tune,

'time amongſt thoſe other, he came out with a long 'gray beard, and bucked ruff, crouching on a ſtaff 'tip't with the head of a Barber's Cithern *, and his 'gloves hanging by a button at his girdle.

'Thoſe fifteen ſeveral perſonages he did repreſent 'with ſuch excellency of garb, and exquiſiteneſs of 'language, that condignely to perpend the ſubtlety of 'the invention, the method of the diſpoſition, the 'neatneſs of the elocution, the gracefulneſs of the 'action, and wonderful variety in the ſo dextrous 'performance of all, you would have taken it for 'a comedy of five acts, conſiſting of three ſcenes, 'each compoſed by the beſt poet in the world, and 'acted by fifteen of the beſt players that ever lived, 'as was moſt evidently made apparent to all the 'ſpectators, in the fifth and laſt hour of his action, '(which, according to our weſtern account, was 'about ſix aclock at night, and, by the calculation 'of that country, half an hour paſt three and twenty, 'at that time of the yeer) for, purpoſing to leave of 'with the ſetting of the ſun, with an endeavour never-'theleſs to make his concluſion the maſter-piece of 'the work, he, to that effect, ſummoning all his ſpi-'rits together, which never failed to be ready at the 'cal of ſo worthy a commander, did, by their aſſiſt-'ance, ſo conglomerate, ſhuffle, mix, and interlace the 'geſtures, inclinations, actions, and very tones of the 'ſpeech of thoſe fifteen ſeveral ſorts of men whoſe car-'riages he did perſonate, into an ineſtimable *Ollapo-*

* The inſtrument now ignorantly called a guitar. It was formerly part of the furniture of a barber's ſhop, and was the amuſement of waiting cuſtomers. See Gen. Hiſt. of the Science and Practice of Muſic, Vol. III. page 408.

'*drida* of immaterial morſels of divers kinds, ſutable
'to the very Ambroſian reliſh of the Heliconian
'Nymphs, that in the *Peripetia* of this Drammatical
'exercitation, by the inchanted tranſportation of the
'eyes and eares of its ſpectabundal auditorie, one
'would have ſworne that they all had looked with
'multiplying glaſſes, and that (like that Angel in the
'Scripture, whoſe voice was ſaid to be like the voice
'of a multitude) they heard in him alone the promiſ-
'cuous ſpeech of fifteen ſeveral actors; by the various
'raviſhments of the excellencies whereof, in the fro-
'lickneſs of a jocund ſtraine beyond expectation, the
'logofaſcinated ſpirits of the beholding hearers and
'auricularie ſpectators, were ſo on a ſudden ſeazed
'upon in their riſible faculties of the ſoul, and all
'their vital motions ſo univerſally affected in this
'extremitie of agitation, that to avoid the inevitable
'charmes of his intoxicating ejaculations, and the
'accumulative influences of ſo powerfull a tranſpor-
'tation, one of my lady Dutcheſs chief Maids of
'Honour, by the vehemencie of the ſhock of thoſe
'incomprehenſible raptures, burſt forth into a laugh-
'ter, to the rupture of a veine in her body; and ano-
'ther young lady, by the irreſiſtible violence of the
'pleaſure unawares infuſed, where the tender recep-
'tibilitie of her too too tickled fancie was leaſt able
'to hold out, ſo unprovidedly was ſurpriſed, that
'with no leſs impetuoſitie of ridibundal paſſion
'then (as hath been told) occaſioned a fracture in
'the other young ladie modeſtie, ſhe, not able
'longer to ſupport the well-beloved burthen of ſo
'exceſſive delight, and intranſing joys of ſuch Mer-
'curial exhilarations, through the ineffable extaſie of

'an

'an overmaſtered apprehenſion, fell back in a ſwown, 'without the appearance of any other life into her, 'then what by the moſt refined wits of theological 'ſpeculators is conceived to be exerced by the pureſt 'parts of the ſeparated *entelechies* of bleſſed ſaints 'in their ſublimeſt converſations with the celeſtial 'hierarchies: this accident procured the incoming of 'an apothecarie with reſtoratives, as the other did 'that of a ſurgeon, with conſolidative medica-'ments.'

Speaking of the manner of Crichton's death, and that it followed from a thruſt with his own ſword by the hand of the prince, ſon of the duke of Mantua, the author ſays;

'The whole court wore mourning for him full 'three quarters of a yeer together: his funeral was 'very ſtately, and on his hearſe were ſtuck more Epi-'taphs, Elegies, Threnodies, and Epicediums, then, 'if digeſted into one book, would have out-bulk't 'all *Homers* works; ſome of them being couched 'in ſuch exquiſite and fine Latin, that you would 'have thought great *Virgil*, and *Baptiſta Mantuanus*, 'for the love of their mother-city, had quit the *Ely-'ſian* fields to grace his obſequies: and other of 'them (beſides what was done in other languages) 'compoſed in ſo neat *Italian*, and ſo purely fancied, 'as if *Arioſto*, *Dante*, *Petrark*, and *Bembo* had been 'purpoſely reſuſcitated, to ſtretch even to the utmoſt, 'their poetick vein, to the honour of this brave man; 'whoſe picture till this hour is to be ſeen in the bed-'chambers or galleries of the moſt of the great men of 'that nation, repreſenting him on horſeback, with a 'lance in one hand, and a book in the other: and

'moſt of the young ladies likewiſe, that were any
'thing handſome, in a memorial of his worth, had
'his effigies in a little oval tablet of gold, hanging
'twixt their breaſts; and held (for many yeers toge-
'ther) that *Metamazion*, or intermammilary ornament,
'an as neceſſary outward pendicle, for the better
'ſetting forth of their accoutrements, as either *Fan*,
'*Watch*, or *Stomacher*.'

The ſeveral exploits of Crichton, above-related, as they appear upon the face of Sir Thomas Urquhart's book, are, it muſt be confeſſed, unſupported by any citations from hiſtory, or the writings of contemporary biographers, or other narrators of remarkable tranſactions, and may, therefore, in the judgment of thoſe who reflect on the hyperbolical ſtyle of the author, and the extravagancies to which ſuch an enthuſiaſtic ſpirit as his will lead men, ſtand in need of ſtill farther proof. Happily, ſince the publication of the Adventurer, ſuch evidence has been laid before the public, as muſt remove all doubt of the exiſtence of ſuch a perſon as Crichton, and of the truth of the facts above-related of him.

For this information we are indebted to Mr. Pennant, who, in his tour to Scotland, vol. I. page 295, confirms the account of Sir Thomas Urquhart in all its particulars, vouching, as his authority, Aldus Manutius, Joannes Imperialis, a phyſician of Vicenza, and a writer whom I take to be Etienne Paſquier, two of whom were perſonally acquainted with him, and eye-witneſſes to the triumphs by them ſeverally recorded. From Aldus Manutius we learn, that Crichton was a ſcholar of Buchanan.

Mr.

Mr. Pennant has further obliged the public with ſome Latin verſes of Crichton's writing, and an engraving of him from an original portrait.

From all which teſtimonies, it is but a neceſſary concluſion, that whatever may be ſuppreſſed, as paſſing credibility, of the perſon here celebrated, enough is, upon inconteſtable authority, related, to induce us to rank him among prodigies.

That Johnſon dictated this number of the Adventurer, I have already ſaid: that he did not himſelf write it may be thus accounted for; he had doubtleſs red the hiſtory of Crichton in Sir Thomas Urquhart's book, and retained it with that firmneſs of memory, which held faſt almoſt every thing that he met with in books. Suppoſing him, as we may, too indolent to recur to one that he had formerly red through, and, in the hearing of Hawkeſworth, to have related the tranſactions of ſo wonderful a man, the latter might catch at it as a fit ſubject for an eſſay, and give it to the world, as he has done in the Adventurer. To which we may add, that Johnſon was ſeldom a narrator of events: his talent was original thinking; in converſation he told ſtories, and related hiſtorical facts with great preciſion, but rarely ſent them abroad in writing.

We are not to ſuppoſe, that that ſoreneſs of mind, which Johnſon ſeems to have felt at the time of his diſcontinuing the Rambler, was, in the ſhort interval of ſix months, ſo completely healed, as to render him a diſintereſted candidate for praiſe in this new publication; or that he who had declared, that he could not compoſe a ſermon, gratis, would write an Adventurer, without being hired to it: on the contrary, it

is certain, that he retained his old maxim, that gain was the only genuine ſtimulative to literary exertion, and that the aſſiſtance he gave to this publication was purchaſed at two guineas, for every number that he had finiſhed; a rate of payment which he had before adjuſted in his ſtipulation for the Rambler, and was probably the meaſure of a reward to his fellow-labourers.

The avowed end of the Adventurer, being the ſame with that of the Rambler, and the plan and conduct thereof ſo little different from it, the latter may be conſidered as a continuation of the former: nevertheleſs, it may be obſerved, that in the Adventurer, the number of entertaining papers, of portraits, ſingular characters, and eſſays of wit, humour, and pleaſantry, is greater, in proportion, than in the Rambler; and to that diverſity it was doubtleſs owing, that the circulation of it was more diffuſe. On the part of the writers it was carried on with great vigour, and, together with the Rambler, is likely to remain a laſting evidence of the ſpirit that dictated, and the public good ſenſe that encouraged, ſuch a ſeries, as they both contain, of religious inſtruction, œconomical wiſdom, and innocent delight.

Hawkeſworth has, almoſt in terms, declared himſelf the editor of the Adventurer, and that the other contributors thereto were merely auxiliaries; and his zeal for its ſucceſs may be inferred from the number of papers written by himſelf, which, upon a compariſon, will be found nearly equal to that of all the reſt. This zeal was excited by a motive far more ſtrong than any which actuated his co-adjutors, a deſire of advantage in his then profeſſion, which oſtenſibly was

that

that of a governor of a ſchool for the education of young females, by making himſelf known as a judge of life and manners, and capable of qualifying thoſe of riper years for the important relations of domeſtic ſociety.

But while he was indulging a well-grounded hope to reap this fruit of his ſtudies, a reward of a very different kind courted his acceptance. The archbiſhop of Canterbury, Dr. Herring, his dioceſan and neighbour, having peruſed his eſſays, and informed himſelf of his general character, made him an offer of a faculty that ſhould raiſe him above the level of vulgar literati, and, almoſt without his being conſcious of any ſuch exaltation, create him a doctor of both laws, and the honour was accepted.

Among men of real learning, there is but one opinion concerning what are called Lambeth degrees. The right of conferring them is a relic of the power anciently exerciſed in this country by the legates of the pope, and is, by ſtatute, transferred to the archbiſhop of Canterbury. It received a legal ſanction in the determination, about the year 1720, of the caſe of the warden of Mancheſter college. Degrees of this kind are often convenient for clergymen, as they are qualifications for a plurality of livings, but, as they imply nothing more than favour, convey little or no honour.

But Hawkeſworth was ſo far miſtaken in his notion of this act of kindneſs of the archbiſhop, that though he had never red Juſtinian, nor perhaps ever ſeen the Corpus Juris Civilis, or Corpus Juris Canonici, he conceived himſelf tranſmuted by it into a civilian and a canoniſt, and qualified for an advocate in either of thoſe judicatures where the above laws are ſeverally recogniſed.

In conſequence of this perſuaſion, he made an effort to be admitted a pleader in the courts of eccleſiaſtical juriſdiction, but met with ſuch an oppoſition as obliged him to deſiſt. Upon this, he bent his courſe another way, and, recurring to his firſt deſign of converting his ſchool into a kind of female academy, ſucceeded, not more to his own emolument, than the improvement of thoſe who participated in the benefits of his tuition.

In this train of events, and others that are well enough known, it may be diſcerned, that Hawkeſworth was a greater gainer by the Adventurer than any of thoſe concerned in it. His ſucceſs, however, wrought no good effects upon his mind and conduct; it elated him too much, and betrayed him into a forgetfulneſs of his origin, and a neglect of his early acquaintance; and on this I have heard Johnſon remark, in terms that ſufficiently expreſſed a knowledge of his character, and a reſentment of his behaviour. It is probable that he might uſe the ſame language to Hawkeſworth himſelf, and alſo reproach him with the acceptance of an academical honour to which he could have no pretenſions, and, which Johnſon, conceiving to be irregular, as many yet do, held in great contempt; thus much is certain, that ſoon after the attainment of it, the intimacy between them ceaſed.

The expedients above-mentioned, and the viſits of a variety of friends, which his writings had procured him, afforded Johnſon great relief, and enabled him to keep at a bay thoſe terrors, which were almoſt inceſſantly aſſailing him, till the beginning of the year 1752, O. S. when it pleaſed God to try him by a calamity, which was very near realizing all thoſe evils which,

which, for a ſeries of years, he had dreaded: this was the loſs of his wife, who, on the 28th day of March, and after ſeventeen years cohabitation, left him a childleſs widower, abandoned to ſorrow, and incapable of conſolation.

Thoſe who were beſt acquainted with them both, wondered that Johnſon could derive no comfort from the uſual reſources, reflections on the conditions of mortality, the inſtability of human happineſs, reſignation to the divine will, and other topics; and the more, when they conſidered, that their marriage was not one of thoſe which inconſiderate young people call love-matches, and that ſhe was more than old enough to be his mother; that, as their union had not been productive of children, the medium of a new relation between them was wanting; that her inattention to ſome, at leaſt, of the duties of a wife, were evident in the perſon of her huſband, whoſe negligence of dreſs ſeemed never to have received the leaſt correction from her, and who, in the ſordidneſs of his apparel, and the complexion of his linen, even ſhamed her. For theſe reaſons I have often been inclined to think, that if this fondneſs of Johnſon for his wife was not diſſembled, it was a leſſon that he had learned by rote, and that, when he practiſed it, he knew not where to ſtop till he became ridiculous. It is true, he has celebrated her perſon in the word formoſæ, which he cauſed to be inſcribed on her grave-ſtone; but could he, with that imperfection in his ſight which made him ſay, in the words of Milton, he never ſaw the human face divine, have been a witneſs of her beauty? which we may ſuppoſe

had

had ſuſtained ſome loſs before he married; her daughter by her former huſband being but little younger than Johnſon himſelf. As, during her lifetime, he invited but few of his friends to his houſe, I never ſaw her, but I have been told by Mr. Garrick, Dr Hawkeſworth, and others, that there was ſomewhat crazy in the behaviour of them both; profound reſpect on his part, and the airs of an antiquated beauty on her's. Johnſon had not then been uſed to the company of women, and nothing but his converſation rendered him tolerable among them: it was, therefore, neceſſary that he ſhould practice his beſt manners to one whom, as ſhe was deſcended from an ancient family, and had brought him a fortune, he thought his ſuperior. This, after all, muſt be ſaid, that he laboured to raiſe his opinion of her to the higheſt, by inſerting in many of her books of devotion that I have ſeen, ſuch endearing memorials as theſe: 'This was dear Tetty's book.'——'This was a 'prayer which dear Tetty was accuſtomed to ſay,' not to mention his frequent recollection of her in his meditations, and the ſingularity of his prayers reſpecting her.

To ſo high a pitch had he worked his remembrance of her, that he requeſted a divine, of his acquaintance, to preach a ſermon at her interment, which, probably, he would have written himſelf, but was diſſuaded from ſo oſtentatious a diſplay of the virtues of a woman, who, though ſhe was his wife, was but little known. He intended alſo to have depoſited her remains in the chapel in Tothill fields, Weſtminſter, but, altering his mind, he committed the diſpoſal of them to his friend Hawkeſworth,

Hawkeſworth, who buried her in his own pariſh-church of Bromley in Kent, under a black marble ſtone, on which Johnſon himſelf, a few months before his death, cauſed the following memorial to be inſcribed:

Hic conduntur reliquiæ
ELIZABETHÆ
Antiqua Jarviſiorum gente,
Peatlingæ, apud Leiceſtrienſes, ortæ;
Formoſæ, cultæ, ingenioſæ, piæ;
Uxoris, primis nuptiis, HENRICI PORTER,
Secundis, SAMUELIS JOHNSON;
Qui multum amatam, diuque defletam
Hoc lapide contexit.
Obiit Londini, menſe Mart.
A. D. MDCCLIII.

I have been informed that, in his early youth, he entertained a romantic paſſion, excited poſſibly by reading the poets, for a young woman of a family and in circumſtances far above him; but proofs are wanting that Johnſon was, at any period of his life, ſuſceptible of amorous emotions. In his intercourſe with the world, he had become known to many of the female ſex, who ſought his converſation*, but it was never heard that he entertained a paſſion for any one, or was in any other ſenſe a lover, than as he was the author of amo-

* Poſterity will wonder to be told, that a celebrated courtezan, Kitty Fiſher, was of the number, and that, poſſibly having heard of the attempt of Laïs on Demoſthenes, ſhe once left her card at his houſe.

rous

rous verſes. If ever he was in danger of becoming one in reality, it was of a young woman whom he uſed to call Molly Aſton, of whoſe wit, and of the delight he enjoyed in converſing with her, he would ſpeak with rapture *, but this was in the life-time of Mrs. Johnſon, and he was a man too ſtrict in his morals to give any reaſonable cauſe of jealouſy to a wife.

The melancholy, which ſeized Johnſon on the death of his wife, was not, in degree, ſuch as uſually follows the deprivation of near relations and friends: it was of the blackeſt and deepeſt kind. That affection, which could excite in the mind of Milton the pleaſing images deſcribed in his ſonnet on his deceaſed wife,

'Methought I ſaw my late eſpouſed ſaint,'

wrought no ſuch effect on that of Johnſon: the apparition of his departed wife was altogether of the terrific kind, and hardly afforded him a hope that ſhe was in a ſtate of happineſs.

* She was a violent whig, and, by conſequence, a declaimer for liberty, a particular in her character that induced Johnſon to compliment her in the following elegant epigram:

Liber ut eſſe velim, ſuaſiſti pulchra Maria,
Ut maneam liber—pulchra Maria, vale!

thus tranſlated by Richard Paul Jodrell, Eſq;

When fair Maria's ſoft perſuaſive ſtrain
Bids univerſal liberty to reign,
Oh! how at variance are her lips and eyes!
For, while the charmer talks, the gazer dies.

That

That theſe gloomy conceptions were in part owing to the books he had been accuſtomed to read, I have little doubt. Sundry paſſages occur in his writings, which induce a ſuſpicion, that his notions of the ſtate of departed ſpirits were ſuch as are now deemed ſuperſtitious; and I will not attempt to vindicate him from the charge of believing ſome of the many relations extant, that go to prove an intercourſe between them and the inhabitants of this earth. Theſe, as they were ſyſtematical, and ſuch as he was able to defend by arguments the moſt ſpecious, I can no better account for, than by a ſuppoſition, that in the courſe of his ſtudies he had been a dabbler in demonology, by which I mean, not the writings of thoſe vulgar authors who relate the intrigues and midnight banquets of witches with infernal ſpirits, or that teach the difference between black and white witches, and aſſert the power of them and their agents to harm us, but from thoſe more authentic writers, namely, Mede, and others, whoſe proofs, that the doctrine of demons made a part of the gentile theology, have induced an opinion that in theſe later times departed ſpirits have ſuch an exiſtence as the intercourſe above-mentioned, ſeems to imply.

Not to dwell longer on ſo painful a ſubject, I will diſmiſs theſe reflections with an obſervation, that by the unhappineſs of his bodily conſtitution, and the defect of his organs of ſenſe, he was rendered unſuſceptible of almoſt all thoſe delights which we term pleaſures of the imagination, and which help to ſoothe the mind under affliction; and this melancholy truth I ſhall attempt to illuſtrate by the following obſervations:

With reſpect to ſight, it muſt be noted, that he was of that claſs of men, who, from a defect in the viſual organs, are termed myops, or near-ſighted perſons; and farther, that diſeaſe had deprived him of the uſe of one eye, the conſequence whereof was, that in lieu of thoſe various delightful proſpects which the face of nature affords, the beautiful and the grand, that multiply ideas and adminiſter delight, as well in the reflection as the immediate enjoyment of them, his mind was preſented with an univerſal blank. Nor was his misfortune leſs, with reſpect to thoſe objects wherein beauty, ſymmetry, and harmony of parts and proportions are reſident: to him a ſtatue was an unſhapen maſs, and a ſumptuous edifice a quarry of ſtone. Of the beauties of painting, notwithſtanding the many eulogiums on that art which, after the commencement of his friendſhip with Sir Joſhua Reynolds, he inſerted in his writings, he had not the leaſt conception; and this leads me to mention a fact to the purpoſe, which I well remember. One evening, at the club, I came in with a ſmall roll of prints, which, in the afternoon, I had picked up: I think they were landſcapes of Perelle, and laying it down with my hat, Johnſon's curioſity prompted him to take it up and unroll it: he viewed the prints ſeverally with great attention, and aſked me what ſort of pleaſure ſuch things could afford me; I told him, that as repreſentations of nature, containing an aſſemblage of ſuch particulars as render rural ſcenes delightful, they preſented to my mind the objects themſelves, and that my imagination realiſed the proſpect before me; he ſaid, that was more than his would do, for that

in his whole life he was never capable of diſcerning the leaſt reſemblance of any kind between a picture and the ſubject it was intended to repreſent.

To the delights of muſic, he was equally inſenſible: neither voice nor inſtrument, nor the harmony of concordant ſounds, had power over his affections, or even to engage his attention. Of muſic in general, he has been heard to ſay, 'it excites in my mind no ideas, 'and hinders me from contemplating my own;' and of a fine ſinger, or inſtrumental performer, that 'he had 'the merit of a Canary-bird*.' Not that his hearing was ſo defective as to account for this inſenſibility, but he laboured under the misfortune which he has noted in his life of Barretier, and is common to more perſons than in this muſical age are willing to confeſs it, of wanting that additional ſenſe or faculty, which renders muſic grateful to the human ear.

From this ſtate of his mental and bodily conſtitution, it muſt neceſſarily be inferred, that his comforts were very few, and that his mind had no counterpoiſe againſt thoſe evils of ſickneſs, ſorrow, and want, which, at different periods of his life he laboured under, and in ſome of his writings pathetically laments. Of this misfortune himſelf was ſenſible,

* I have ſometimes thought that muſic was poſitive pain to him. Upon his once hearing a celebrated performer go through a hard compoſition, and hearing it remarked that it was very difficult, Johnſon ſaid, 'I would it had been impoſſible.' As a ſcience of which he was ignorant he contemned it. In the early part of my life I had collected ſome memoirs of Abbate Steffani, Mr. Handel's predeceſſor at the court of Hanover, and the compoſer of thoſe fine duets that go under his name, with a view to print them, as preſents to ſome muſical friends: I ſubmitted the manuſcript to Johnſon's peruſal, and he returned it with corrections that turned to ridicule all I had ſaid of him and his works.

and

and the frequent reflection thereon wrought in him a perſuaſion, that the evils of human life preponderated againſt the enjoyments of it; and this opinion he would frequently enforce by an obſervation on the general uſe of narcotics in all parts of the world, as, in the eaſt, and ſouthern countries, opium; in the weſt, and northern, ſpirituous liquors and tobacco*; and into this principle he reſolved moſt of the temptations to ebriety. To the uſe of the former of theſe, himſelf had a ſtrong propenſity, which increaſed as he advanced in years: his firſt inducement to it was, relief againſt watchfulneſs, but when it became habitual, it was the means of poſitive pleaſure, and as ſuch, was reſorted to by him whenever any depreſſion of ſpirits made it neceſſary. His practice was, to take it in ſubſtance, that is to ſay, half a grain levigated with a ſpoon againſt the ſide of a cup half full of ſome liquid, which, as a vehicle, carried it down.

With ſo few reſources of delight, it is not to be wondered at, if after the loſs of his wife, his melancholy was hardly ſupportable. Company and converſation were the only reliefs to it, and when theſe failed him he was miſerable. At the club in Ivy lane, our uſual hour of departure was eleven, and when that approached he was frequently tempted to wander the ſtreets, and join in the converſation of thoſe miſerable females who were there to be met with. Of theſe he was very inquiſitive as to their courſe of life, the hiſtory of their ſeduction, and the chances of reclaiming them. The firſt queſtion he generally

* He has been heard to remark, that ſince the diſuſe of ſmoaking among the better ſort of people, ſuicide has been more frequent in this country than before.

aſked,

aſked was, if they could read. Of one who was very handſome, he aſked, for what ſhe thought God had given her ſo much beauty: ſhe anſwered—'To pleaſe 'gentlemen *.'

In the midſt of the diſtreſſes which, at this period of his life, ſurrounded him, he found both inclination and the means to be helpful to others. His wife, a ſhort time before her death, had conſigned to his care a friend of her own ſex, a perſon of very extraordinary endowments, whom, for a benevolent purpoſe that will be ſhortly mentioned, Johnſon had invited to a reſidence in his houſe: This was Mrs. Anna Williams, whoſe hiſtory is as follows:

Her father, Zachariah Williams, was a ſurgeon and phyſician in South Wales, a man of parts and great ingenuity: he had addicted himſelf to mathematical ſtudies, and having, by a kind of intuitive penetration, diſcovered, that the variations of the magnetic needle were equal at equal diſtances eaſt and weſt; he entertained a ſanguine hope, that he had attained the means of aſcertaining the longitude. As London was the place where he thought he ſhould beſt avail himſelf of his diſcovery, and alſo turn it to the improvement of his fortunes, he, in the year 1730, with an apparatus of mathematical and nautical inſtruments of his own invention, left his habitation and buſineſs, and, together with his daughter, ſettled in the metropolis. His firſt buſineſs was, to lay before the commiſſioners of the longitude the fruits of his

* This ſtory is too well atteſted for me to omit it; but it leaves it a queſtion, how, with the defect of ſight under which he laboured, he was capable of diſcerning beauty. He might poſſibly think it an indiſpenſable requiſite for her profeſſion, and therefore conclude that ſhe had it.

ſtudies; but, upon a due examination, they all proved abortive: no proportion whatever of the reward could be aſſigned him as his due; but, as a kind of recompence for his diſappointment, means were found to procure him a maintenance in the Charterhouſe, and accordingly he was admitted into that aſylum of age and poverty. With all his ingenuity and ſcientific wiſdom, which I have heard his daughter, with an excuſable partiality, magnify beyond credibility, he muſt have been defective in worldly prudence; for, either by the infraction of œconomical regulations, or ſome other miſconduct reſpecting the endowment from which he derived his ſupport, he rendered himſelf at firſt obnoxious to cenſure from the governors, and in the end was obliged to forego all the benefits of it, to become an outcaſt, and, at the age of ſeventy-five, to ſuffer ſhipwreck in the wide ocean of the world. In a narrative, publiſhed in 1749, he complains of his expulſion as an act of injuſtice.

What became of him afterwards I could never learn, ſave that in the year 1755, he publiſhed in Italian and Engliſh a book intitled, 'An account of 'an attempt to aſcertain the longitude at ſea, by an 'exact theory of the magnetical needle,' written, as it is ſuppoſed, by Johnſon, and tranſlated by Mr. Baretti. Of his daughter, I am able to ſay more, having known her a long time. About ten years after her arrival with her father in London, ſhe was alarmed by the appearance of a cataract on both her eyes, which continued to increaſe till it totally deprived her of her ſight. Before this calamity befel her, ſhe, with the aſſiſtance of her father, had acquired a knowledge of the French and Italian

languages, and had made great improvements in literature, which, together with the exerciſe of her needle, at which ſhe was very dextrous, as well after the loſs of her ſight as before, contributed to ſupport her under her affliction, till a time when it was thought by her friends, that relief might be obtained from the hand of an operating ſurgeon. At the requeſt of Dr. Johnſon, I went with her to a friend of mine, Mr. Samuel Sharp, ſenior ſurgeon of Guy's hoſpital, who before had given me to underſtand, that he would couch her gratis if the cataract was ripe, but upon making the experiment it was found otherwiſe, and that the cryſtalline humour was not ſufficiently inſpiſſated for the needle to take effect. She had been almoſt a conſtant companion of Mrs. Johnſon for ſome time before her deceaſe, but had never reſided in the houſe: afterwards, for the convenience of performing the intended operation, Johnſon took her home, and upon the failure of that, kept her as the partner of his dwelling till he removed into chambers, firſt in Gray's inn, and next in the Temple. Afterward, in 1766, upon his taking a houſe in Johnſon's court in Fleet ſtreet, he invited her thither, and in that, and his laſt houſe in Bolt court, ſhe ſucceſſively dwelt for the remainder of her life.

The loſs of her ſight made but a ſmall abatement of her chearfulneſs, and was ſcarce any interruption of her ſtudies. With the aſſiſtance of two female friends, ſhe tranſlated from the French of Pere La Bletrie, the life of the emperor Julian*. In 1755, Mr. Garrick, ever diſpoſed to help the afflicted, in-

* See it mentioned in Nichols's Life of Bowyer.

dulged her with a benefit-play that produced two hundred pounds; and in 1766, ſhe publiſhe ſubſcription a quarto volume of miſcellanies in and verſe, and thereby increaſed her little fun three hundred pounds, which, being prudently in ed, yielded an income, that under ſuch protectio ſhe experienced from Dr. Johnſon, was ſufficien her ſupport.

She was a woman of an enlightened underſtand plain, as the women call it, in her perſon, and e provoked to anger, but poſſeſſing, nevertheleſs, excellent moral qualities, among which no one more conſpicuous, than her deſire to promote welfare and happineſs of others, and of this gave a ſignal proof, by her ſolicitude in favou an inſtitution for the maintenance and educatio poor deſerted females in the pariſh of St. Sepul London, ſupported by the voluntary contributio ladies, and, as the foundation-ſtone of a fund fo future ſubſiſtence, ſhe bequeathed to it the who that little, which, by the means above-menti ſhe had been able to accumulate. To the en ments and qualities here aſcribed to her, m added, a larger ſhare of experimental prudence d the lot of moſt of her ſex. Johnſon, in many gences, found her an able counſellor, and ſ ſhewed his wiſdom more than when he hearke her advice. In return, ſhe received from his co ſation the advantages of religious and moral imp ment, which ſhe cultivated ſo, as in a great m to ſmooth the conſtitutional aſperity of her te When theſe particulars are known, this inti

ich began with compaſſion, and terminate friei

lſhip that ſubſiſted till death diſſolved it, will be accounted for.

hnſon had but for a ſhort time enjoyed the relief ſolitude and melancholy reflection which this lly attachment afforded him, before he expe- ed that affliction, which, in the courſe of nature, e concomitant of longevity, in the loſs of his l Cave, who finiſhed a uſeful and well-ſpent life e month of January, 1754. It might ſeem that een men ſo different in their endowments and ers as Johnſon and Cave were, little of true lſhip could ſubſiſt, but the contrary was the

Cave, though a man of a ſaturnine diſpoſition, a ſagacity which had long been exerciſed in the mination of men, in ſearching into the receſſes eir minds, and finding out what they were fit and a liberality of ſentiment and action, which, r proper reſtrictions, inclined him not only to rage genius and merit, but to eſteem and even nerate the poſſeſſors of thoſe qualities as often as iet with them: it cannot, therefore, be ſuppoſed, iat he entertained a high regard for ſuch a man hnſon, and, having had a long experience of his ies and integrity, that he had improved this diſ- on into friendſhip. Johnſon, on his part, ſought her qualities in thoſe with whom he meant to connections: had he determined to make only his friends whoſe endowments were equal to his his life would have been that of a Carthuſian; s therefore more ſolicitous to contract friend- with men of probity and integrity, and endued good moral qualities, than with thoſe whoſe in- ual powers, or literary attainments, were the

moſt conſpicuous part of their character; and of the former, Cave had a ſhare, ſufficient to juſtify his choice.

On this mutual regard for each other, as on a ſolid baſis, reſted the friendſhip between Johnſon and Cave. It was therefore with a degree of ſorrow, proportioned to his feelings towards his friends, which were ever tender, that Johnſon reflected on the loſs he had to ſuſtain, and became the narrator of the moſt important incidents of his life. In the account which he has given of his death, it will be readily believed, that what he has related reſpecting the conſtancy of his friendſhip, is true, and that when, as the laſt act of reaſon, he fondly preſſed the hand that was afterwards employed in recording his memory, his affection was ſincere.

By ſome papers now in my hands it ſeems that, notwithſtanding Johnſon was paid for writing the Rambler, he had a remaining intereſt in the copy-right of that paper, which about this time he ſold. The produce thereof, the pay he was receiving for his papers in the Adventurer, and the fruits of his other literary labours, had now exalted him to ſuch a ſtate of comparative affluence, as, in his judgment, made a manſervant neceſſary. Soon after the deceaſe of Mrs. Johnſon, the father of Dr. Bathurſt arrived in England from Jamaica, and brought with him a negro-ſervant, a native of that iſland, whom he cauſed to be baptized and named Francis Barber, and ſent for inſtruction to Burton upon Tees in Yorkſhire: upon the deceaſe of captain Bathurſt, for ſo he was called, Francis went to live with his ſon, who willingly parted with him to Johnſon. The uſes for which he was intended

to

to ſerve this his laſt maſter were not very apparent, for Diogenes himſelf never wanted a ſervant leſs than he ſeemed to do: the great buſhy wig, which throughout his life he affected to wear, by that cloſeneſs of texture which it had contracted and been ſuffered to retain, was ever nearly as impenetrable by a comb as a quickſet hedge; and little of the duſt that had once ſettled on his outer garments was ever known to have been diſturbed by the bruſh. In ſhort, his garb and the whole of his external appearance was, not to ſay negligent, but ſlovenly, and even ſqualid; to all which, and the neceſſary conſequences of it, he appeared as inſenſible as if he had been nurtured at the Cape of Good Hope: he ſaw that, notwithſtanding theſe offenſive peculiarities in his manners, his converſation had great attractions, and perhaps he might eſtimate the ſtrength of the one by the degree of the other, and thence derive that apathy, which, after all, might have its foundation in pride, and afforded him occaſion for a triumph over all the ſolicitudes reſpecting dreſs *.

* That he was an habitual ſloven his beſt friends cannot deny. When I firſt knew him, he was little leſs ſo than Magliabechi, of whom it is ſaid, that at meals he made a book ſerve him for a plate, and that he very ſeldom changed his linen, or waſhed himſelf. It is ſaid of other ſcholars and men eminent in literature, of Leibnitz, Poiret, St. Evremond, and Pope, that they were alike uncleanly. Johnſon, as his acquaintance with perſons of condition became more enlarged, and his invitations to dinner-parties increaſed, corrected, in ſome degree, this failing, but could never be ſaid to be neatly dreſſed, or indeed clean; he affected to wear cloaths of the darkeſt and dirtieſt colours, and, in all weathers, black ſtockings. His wig never ſat even on his head, as may be obſerved in all the pictures of him, the reaſon whereof was, that

Of this negro-ſervant much has been ſaid, by thoſe who knew little or nothing of him, in juſtification of that partiality which Johnſon ſhewed for him, and his neglect of his own neceſſitous relations. The following particulars are all that are worth relating of him: He ſtayed with Johnſon about five years, that is to ſay, till 1758, and then left him, but at the end of two years returned, and was taken again into his ſervice. His firſt maſter had, in great humanity, made him a Chriſtian; and his laſt, for no aſſignable reaſon, nay, rather in deſpight of nature, and to unfit him for being uſeful according to his capacity, determined to make him a ſcholar.

He placed him at a ſchool at Biſhop-Stortford, and kept him there five years; and, as Mrs. Williams was uſed to ſay, who would frequently reproach him with his indiſcretion in this inſtance, expended three hundred pounds in an endeavour to have him taught Latin and Greek *.

The propoſal for the dictionary, and other of his writings, had exhibited Johnſon to view in the character of a poet and a philologiſt: to his moral qualities, and his concern for the intereſts of religion and virtue, the world were for ſome time ſtrangers; but no ſooner were theſe manifeſted by the publication of the Rambler and the Adventurer, than he was looked up to as a maſter of human life, a practical Chriſtian,

he had a twiſt in his ſhoulders, and that the motion of his head, as ſoon as he put it [illegible] it awry.

* Mrs. Williams, who, [illegible] a view to the intereſt of her friend, was very attentive to [illegible] his favourite, when ſhe took occaſion to complain to his maſter of his miſbehaviour, would do it in ſuch terms as theſe: 'This is your ſcholar! your philoſopher! 'upon whom you have ſpent ſo many hundred pounds.'

and

and a divine; his acquaintance was ſought by perſons of the firſt eminence in literature, and his houſe, in reſpect of the converſations there, became an academy. One perſon, in particular, who ſeems, for a great part of his life, to have affected the character of a patron of learned and ingenious men, in a letter which I have ſeen, made him a tender of his friendſhip in terms to this effect:—'That having peruſed many of 'his writings, and thence conceived a high opinion of 'his learning, his genius, and moral qualities, if Mr. 'Johnſon was inclined to enlarge the circle of his ac-'quaintance, he [the letter-writer] ſhould be glad to 'be admitted into the number of his friends, and to 'receive a viſit from him.'——This perſon was Mr. Dodington, afterwards lord Melcombe, the value and honour of whoſe patronage, to ſpeak the truth, may in ſome degree be eſtimated by his diary lately publiſhed, but better by the account which I mean here to give of his favourites and dependents, with ſome of whom I was perſonally acquainted. How Johnſon received this invitation I know not: as it was conveyed in very handſome expreſſions, it required ſome apology for declining it, and I cannot but think he framed one.

One of the earlieſt of lord Melcombe's clients was Dr. Edward Young, the author of the Satires, of the Night-thoughts, and of the Revenge, a tragedy; a man who, by a ſtrange fatality, could never attain to any of thoſe diſtinctions in his profeſſion, which are generally underſtood to be the rewards of learning and piety, and muſt be ſuppoſed to have failed by the ardour with which he ſolicited, and the ſervile adulation which he practiſed to come at them, of which latter diſpoſition he

he has given ſuch inſtances in the dedications of his ſatires to the ſeveral perſons of high rank, to whom they are addreſſed, as alſo, in the exordium to each of the Night-thoughts at their firſt coming abroad, for in the later edition they are omitted, as are a diſgrace to manhood, and muſt have put the vaineſt of his patrons to the bluſh.

Mr. James Ralph was another of his dependents, of whom, as a pretender to genius, much may be learned from the Dunciad. He was the tool of that party, of which his lordſhip laboured in vain to become the leader; and, to ſerve its purpoſes, by inflaming the minds of the people, wrote a weekly paper called the Remembrancer*. For this and other good deeds of the like kind, he is, in the diary above-mentioned, held forth as an exemplar to all writers of his profeſſion, and dignified with the character of an honeſt man.

Another of theſe men of genius, who enjoyed the favour of Mr. Dodington, was Mr. Paul Whitehead, whoſe love for his country, and knowledge of its intereſts, became firſt known by a ſatire of his writing entitled, 'The State Dunces,' which, as he was a patriot, and, as all patriots pretend to be, a firm friend to what they call the conſtitution, bears this candid motto:

* Whoever is deſirous of being acquainted with the intrigues of contending factions, and the methods of exciting popular diſcontent, may receive ample information from the peruſal of lord Melcombe's Diary, and will there find, that to effect this purpoſe, and furniſh the unthinking multitude with topics for clamour, the publication of a political news-paper was by him and his party thought expedient. I have been credibly informed, that dean Swift would frequently boaſt, that with liberty allowed him for the free exerciſe of his pen on the meaſures of government, he was able to write down any miniſtry whatever.

'I from my ſoul ſincerely hate
'Both kings and miniſters of ſtate.'

He alſo wrote 'Manners,' a ſatire; a libel of a more general tendency, as including in it many invectives againſt ſome of the nobility, and moſt eminent of the dignified clergy.

Of this man, who many years was my neighbour in the country, I know much to blame and ſomewhat to commend: he may be ſuppoſed, in his younger days, to have imbibed that malevolence againſt the Hanover ſucceſſion, which was the ſentiment of many at the beginning of this century, and by an eaſy tranſition, to which the peruſal of ſuch papers as the Craftſman, Common-ſenſe, and other publications of the time, and, moſt of all, the converſation of ſuch perſons as he choſe for his aſſociates, might probably lead him, to have engendered in his mind a hatred of all whoſe offices in the ſtate had made the ſupport of government their duty, and a reſolution to acquieſce in that fallacious diſcrimination of two claſſes of men, the one whereof was in, and the other out of power, into the court and country parties.

It is not much to the credit of the latter of theſe two, that ſome of the writers on the ſide of it were ſuch avowed enemies to religion, as might beget, in thoſe acquainted with their characters, a ſuſpicion that, as in the language of politics, there is an alliance between church and ſtate, a ſimilar relation ſubſiſts between infidelity and patriotiſm, proofs whereof have not been wanting in theſe our late times; for it is evident, that as the injunctions to obedience imply religion, the want thereof, *quoad* the perſon who is to pay it, vacates the obligation, and leaves him at liberty to form an alliance with the other ſide.

And that ſome of the writers on the ſide of the country party, as it was called, particularly in the Craftſman, were men of this character, is certain. Amhurſt, the oſtenſible author of the paper, was expelled his univerſity, and was, moreover, a friend and aſſociate of Strutt, an attorney of the temple, who wrote ſeveral letters or eſſays in his paper, and a treatiſe with ſome ſuch title as, 'A philoſophical enquiry into 'the nature of human liberty,' wherein the freedom of the human will is denied, and the actions of men are made to reſult from an irreſiſtible neceſſity. This tract I have heard Whitehead commend and aſſert that it contained a full refutation of all that Dr. Clarke, in his controverſy with Leibnitz, has advanced in favour of the contrary opinion, and at the ſame time ſpeak of the author as one whom the greatneſs of his parts, had he lived, would have raiſed to the dignity of lord-chancellor; but of whoſe moral and religious principles a judgment may be formed, by means of the following letter, which, for the atheiſtical expreſſions contained therein, was the ground for the expulſion of the writer of it from the univerſity of Cambridge. I forbear remarking on this blaſphemous epiſtle, farther than, that the regret I have often felt in the peruſal of it has been not a little increaſed by the figure that my friend Paul makes in it, and the intimacy between him and Strutt which it diſcloſes.

'To Mr. STEPHEN G——ES.

'Dear Stephen, Oct. 3, 1734.

'I received yours, with the guinea and the partridges, 'for which I return you many thanks, and need not 'ſay how much I ſhould rejoice in your company at

'the

'the eating of them. But we not only ſuffer the loſs
'of that, but of P——— B———'s too, who went to
'London incog. laſt Monday, and it is uncertain
'when he'll have power to break from the arms of
'his charmer, but V——— will ſupply his place at
'the Tuns to-day, who is as great a hero in the cauſe
'of truth.

'I am very glad to hear W——— B——— ap-
'pears ſo well in the world again, and when you ſee
'him, beg you would remember my kind reſpects to
'him, wiſhing him all joy. And as to any farther
'progreſs in atheiſm, I was arriv'd at the top, the ne
'plus ultra, before I enjoyed the beatifick viſion (the
'night I was born in the ſpirit from you) being fixed
'and immoveable in the knowledge of the truth, to
'which I attained by means of that infallible guide
'the Philoſophical Enquiry; and I am glad to hear,
'what I did not at all doubt of, that it would equally
'enlighten your underſtanding; and am perſuaded
'that you ſee the neceſſary connection between every
'propoſition, and conſequently, that the points now
'in debate are ſtrictly demonſtrated. If any material
'objection ſhould ariſe (which is barely a poſſible
'ſuppoſition) I beg you will conſult me, or ſome
'other able miniſter of the word of truth, to the
'quieting of your conſcience, and avoiding all ſcruple
'and doubt.

'I was inexpreſſibly happy with the moſt adorable
'and omniſcient Father Strutt, his brother White-
'head, W———, &c. completely fulfilling the ſcene
'propoſed in his letter.

'On Saturday we came to Cambridge, where we
'had the full enjoyment of their's till Tueſday, when

'they return'd to Bury; and laſt Saturday I went 'thither again by appointment, but they were obliged 'to ſet out that day for London, and I went with them 'to Sudbury, where we lay. You'll imagine I was 'tranſported with their company, and would not have 'left them before they got to London, but that I was 'obliged to return to college to pray.

'I've ſent you one ſong as a taſte of our mirth*. I 'receiv'd a letter from the preſident yeſterday, which 'obliges me to return to Horkſley next Tueſday.— 'I hope I ſhall have the pleaſure of ſeeing you in 'college about the 5th of November. In the mean 'time I ſhall be glad of a line or two from you, 'and am

'Your ſincere friend
'and humble ſervant,
'T. D—CK—T.'

'P. S. Strutt was the author of the three letters 'in the laſt Craftſmen, except laſt Saturday's, and 'will write in defence of them in anſwer to the mi- 'niſterial writers. I intend myſelf the pleaſure of 'drinking tea with Polly this afternoon. My ſervice 'to Mr. G———, Miſs Nanny, and all friends.'

The political principles of Whitehead recommended him to Mr. Dodington, whoſe oſtentation was gratified, and his ambitious views in a way to be advanced, by a connection with a man who had abilities to write, and the boldneſs to publiſh whatever might ſerve the purpoſes of a party, and whoſe zeal for its intereſts was ſubject to any direction.

* Suppoſed to be, 'Religion's a politic law.'

Dodington

Dodington admired the keenneſs of Whitehead's wit, and the ſpirit of his ſatires, and his commendations were repaid by the latter, with encomiums on his patron's political wiſdom and qualifications for ſtate employments, which, as they ſeemed to have no foundation in principle, Paul was as little able to inveſtigate as to delineate the path of a comet. In his converſation there was little to praiſe: it was deſultory, vociferous, and profane. He had contracted a habit of ſwearing in his younger years, which he retained to his lateſt. At Twickenham he never frequented divine ſervice; and when preſſed by one of his friends there to ſhew himſelf at church, excuſed himſelf by ſaying he was not ſettled. He was viſited by very few of the inhabitants of the village; but his houſe was open to all his London friends, among whom were Mr. Hogarth, Iſaac Ware the architect, George Lambert, and Hayman the painters, and Mr. Havard the player, men who had ſpent all their lives in and about Covent-garden, and looked upon it as the ſchool of manners, and an epitome of the world.

Paul was endowed with a great portion of wit, but it was altogether of the ſatyrical kind, and ſerved to little purpoſe, other than to expoſe to ridicule or contempt the objects to which it was directed. In concert with one Carey a ſurgeon, he planned and exhibited a proceſſion along the Strand, of perſons on foot and on horſeback, dreſſed for the occaſion, carrying mock enſigns, and the ſymbols of free-maſonry*; the deſign of which was, to expoſe to laughter the inſignia and ceremonies of that myſterious inſtitution,

* A print of the proceſſion, deſigned and engraved by Benoiſt, was publiſhed about the time.

and

and it was not till thirty years after, that the fraternity recovered the diſgrace which ſo ludicrous a repreſentation had brought on it.

After enumerating theſe his exceptionable qualities, it is but juſtice to ſay of Whitehead, that he was by nature a friendly and kind-hearted man, well acquainted with vulgar manners and the town, but little ſkilled in the knowledge of the world, and, by conſequence, little able to reſiſt the arts of deſigning men; and of this defect he gave a melancholy proof in ſubmitting to be engaged for Fleetwood, the patentee of Drury-lane theatre, in a bond for 3000l; for failure in the payment whereof he ſuſtained impriſonment in the Fleet for ſome of the beſt years of his life. He had married a woman of a good family and fortune, whom, though homely in her perſon, and little better than an idiot, he treated not only with humanity, but with tenderneſs, hiding, as well as he was able, thoſe defects in her underſtanding, which are oftener the ſubjects of ridicule than of compaſſion. After his enlargement, ſome money fell to him, with which, and the profits of the place of deputy-treaſurer of the chamber, which he held for ſome time under lord Le Deſpenſer, he purchaſed a cottage on Twickenham common, and from a deſign and under the inſpection of his friend Iſaac Ware, at a ſmall expence improved it into an elegant dwelling. Here he manifeſted the goodneſs of his nature in the exerciſe of kind offices, in healing breaches, and compoſing differences between his poor neighbours; and living to ſee, as he did at the commencement of his preſent majeſty's reign, power lodged in the hands of ſuch as he thought friends of their country, and above all temptations to abuſe it,

he

abandoned his factious principles, and became a
al ſubject. In a grateful ſenſe of his obligations
ord Le Deſpenſer, he directed, that after his deceaſe,
heart, incloſed in a veſſel for the purpoſe, ſhould
preſented to him, which being done, his lordſhip
ıſed it to be depoſited in his church of Weſt
ycomb.

Dr. Thompſon was one of the many phyſicians
o, in this country, have enjoyed a ſhort-lived repu-
ion, acquired by methods unknown to any but
mſelves. The earlieſt of his practice was among
n of eminence, Mr. Pope and others, who, de-
ved by his confidence and a certain contempt
h which he ever ſpoke of the reſt of his profeſſion
being bigotted to theories and ſyſtems, looked
on him as a man of an inventive genius, who had
luced the art of healing to an epitome. The
t was, that, affecting to be a free-thinker in his
ulty, he ſet at nought the diſcoveries and improve-
nts of others, and treated with ridicule that practice
ich he did not underſtand. He was an everlaſting
ter on politics and criticiſm, and ſaw ſo deep into
: councils of the king of Pruſſia, that he could
gn the motives of all his actions, during the laſt
r in which he was engaged. At taverns, in coffee-
uſes, at the cyder-cellar in Maiden lane, he was
quently to be found holding forth on theſe ſubjects
hout interruption, in a tone of voice which Mr.
rrick would ſay was like the buz of an humble-
e in a hall-window. This man enjoyed the favour
lord Melcombe, and, what was of greater benefit to
n, an apartment in his houſe, with a protection from
eſts, founded on the privilege which the law grants,

not only to peers, but to the loweſt of their menial ſervants.

Quin once told me a ſtory of this man, which I will relate in as few words as I am able.—Quin walking up and down, one Sunday evening, in the Bedford coffee-houſe, obſerved a man in a dark corner leaning his forehead on the table, and every now and then ſending forth a ſigh, that ſeemed to come from his heart. Moved with compaſſion, he went up to him, and enquiring the cauſe of his grief, was told by him, that his name was Thompſon, that he was a phyſician riſing into practice, but that, for want of fifty pounds, his chariot could not go abroad the next day, and his patients muſt remain unviſited. Quin bid him be comforted, and, ſtepping to his lodgings in Bedford ſtreet, returned with a bank-note for that ſum, which he told Thompſon he would not expect till he was able to repay it: the other anſwered, that a month was as long as he wiſhed to retain it; but Quin told him that he could ſpare it for three, or even ſix months, and took his leave. Six months elapſed, and no apology made for non-payment of the money. Quin, in a civil letter, reminded Thompſon of the terms on which it was lent, but receiving no anſwer to that and others that he wrote, he was obliged to ſend him one by his attorney, which produced a notification from the duke of Newcaſtle's office, that the name of Dr. Thompſon was there entered as of a perſon privileged from arreſts, and that it would be at Mr. Quin's peril if he proceeded to violate that protection which he claimed, and the law granted him. Being thus prohibited from the reſtraint of his perſon, Quin was obliged to wait the re-payment of his money, which,

which, at the expiration of ſome months, he received, but without the leaſt acknowledgment of his kindneſs in lending it.

This was a man whom Whitehead, in the ſimplicity of his heart, held in ſuch eſtimation, that I have ſeen him, for hours together, liſtening, with his lips uncloſed, to the torrents of nonſenſe he was pouring forth: he addreſſed an epiſtle to him, wherein he celebrates his medical abilities and moral qualities, and makes the number of perſons daily reſtored by him to health, equal to thoſe who were ſent to their long-homes by Wilmot and the other eminent phyſicians his rivals and contemporaries.

Notwithſtanding the advantages with which he ſet out, and the extravagant encomiums of Fielding and others, of him and his practice, Thompſon ſunk into contempt and obſcurity. Like Paracelſus, he performed a few cures, that neither himſelf nor any others were ever able to account for; and in a caſe of ſurgery he was once known, by dint of mere obſtinacy, to have ſaved a limb. A ſon of a friend of mine, an officer, being in the ſervice in Germany, and at the head of a ſkirmiſhing-party on horſeback, received a wound with a ſabre that ſeparated the tendons and ligaments which connect the foot with the leg: at a conſultation on his caſe of two of the moſt eminent ſurgeons, Thompſon, as being the family phyſician, was called to aſſiſt, who, in oppoſition to their opinion that an amputation was inevitable, ſwore that his friend ſhould not undergo it: the operation was deferred, and by the help of the Malvern waters, the patient recovered ſuch an uſe of the whole limb as enabled him to walk with ſcarce any variation of his accuſtomed gait.

Had Johnſon accepted of Mr. Dodington's invitation, it cannot be ſuppoſed that he would have been much pleaſed with the company of theſe and ſuch other perſons as it was likely to introduce him to. His declining it ſeems, therefore, an act of great prudence, and indeed he was exempted from the neceſſity of ſeeking connections; for many perſons were of Dodington's mind, and were deſirous of adding him to the number of their friends. Invitations to dine with ſuch of thoſe as he liked, he ſo ſeldom declined, that, to a friend of his, he ſaid, 'I never but once, upon a 'reſolution to employ myſelf in ſtudy, balked an in-'vitation out to dinner, and then I ſtayed at home and 'did nothing.' Little, however, did that laxity of temper, which this confeſſion ſeems to imply, retard the progreſs of the great work in which he was employed: the concluſion, and alſo the perfection of his dictionary, were objects from which his attention was not to be diverted: the avocations he gave way to were ſuch only as, when complied with, ſerved to invigorate his mind to the performance of his engagements to his employers and the public, and haſten the approach of the day that was to reward his labour with applauſe.

That day it was his happineſs to ſee; for, by the end of the year 1754, he had completed his copy, not more to his own eaſe and ſatisfaction, than to the joy of Millar the bookſeller, the principal proprietor of the work, and the guardian or treaſurer of the fund out of which the payments were from time to time iſſued. To ſay the truth, his joy on the occaſion was ſo great, that he could not refrain from expreſſing it ſomewhat intemperately, as appears by the following acknowledgment

acknowledgment of the receipt of the laſt ſheet of the manuſcript:

'Andrew Millar ſends his compliments to Mr. 'Samuel Johnſon, with the money for the laſt ſheet 'of copy of the Dictionary, and thanks God he has 'done with him.'

To which Johnſon returned this good-humoured and brief anſwer:

'Samuel Johnſon returns his compliments to Mr. 'Andrew Millar, and is very glad to find, as he 'does by his note, that Andrew Millar has the grace 'to thank God for any thing.'

The publication of this great work ſoon followed, as may be imagined, the interchange of theſe two very laconic epiſtles; and the month of May 1755, put the world in poſſeſſion of a treaſure, the value whereof it will require the experience of years to find out. To recommend it to the notice of foreigners, he was deſirous it ſhould appear to come from one who had attained academical honours: he therefore applied, by his friend Mr. Thomas Warton, to the univerſity of Oxford for a maſter's degree, and obtained it by a diploma, dated the tenth day of February 1755, the tenour whereof is, that the moſt learned Samuel Johnſon, of Pembroke college, having diſtinguiſhed himſelf in the literary world by his writings, tending to form the popular manners; and having, for the adorning and ſettling his native language, compiled, and being about to publiſh an Engliſh dictionary, the chancellor, maſters, and ſcholars of the ſaid Univerſity, in ſolemn convocation aſſembled, do therefore conſtitute and appoint the ſaid Samuel

Johnſon, Maſter of Arts, and command, that he enjoy and exerciſe all the rights, privileges, and honours to that degree appertaining.

Upon the receipt of this inſtrument, Johnſon teſtified his gratitude for the honour done him, in a letter to the vice-chancellor, which, as a ſpecimen of a fine Latin ſtyle, I here inſert:

'Reverendo admodum viro G. Huddesford, S. T. P. 'Oxonienſis academiæ Vice-cancellario digniſſimo.

'Ingratus plane et tibi et mihi videar, niſi quanto 'me gaudio affecerint, quos nuper mihi honores, te 'credo auctore, decrevit ſenatus academicus, litera- 'rum, quo tamen nihil levius, officio ſignificem: 'ingratus etiam, niſi comitatem, qua vir eximius* 'mihi veſtri teſtimonium amoris in manus tradidit, 'agnoſcam et laudem. Siquid eſt, unde rei tam 'gratæ accedat gratia, hoc ipſo magis mihi placet, 'quod eo tempore in ordines academicos denuo 'cooptatus ſim, quo tuam imminuere auctoritatem, 'famamque Oxoniæ lædere, omnibus modis conantur 'homines vafri nec tamen acuti: quibus ego, prout 'viro umbratico licuit, ſemper reſtiti, ſemper reſti- 'turus. Qui enim, inter has rerum procellas, vel 'tibi vel academiæ defuerit, illum virtuti, et literis, 'ſibique, et poſteris, defuturum exiſtimo.'

'S. JOHNSON.'

So near perfection had the author brought his dictionary, that, upon a review of it previous to his drawing up the preface, he declares, he is unable to detect the caſual omiſſion of more than one article,

* The Vir eximius above-mentioned is Dr. King of St. Mary hall, who delivered the diploma to Johnſon in London.

the

the appellative OCEAN. Nor has he, as I know, been charged with any other defect, or with any misinterpretation of a word, save in an instance or two, where, being moved by party-prejudice, he has imposed significations on a few words that are indefensible. Let these be imputed to a mind agonized, at various periods during the prosecution of this laborious work, with indigence, with sorrow, and pain; and let the piteous description of his circumstances and feelings, which the preface contains, induce us to bury our resentment of a few petulant expressions, in the reflection, that this stupendous compilation was undertaken and completed by the care and industry of a single person.

Upon occasion of publishing the dictionary, Mr. Garrick celebrated the author in the following lines:

'Talk of war with a Briton, he'll boldly advance,
'That one English soldier will beat ten of France;
'Would we alter the boast from the sword to the pen,
'Our odds are still greater, still greater our men:
'In the deep mines of science though Frenchmen may toil,
'Can their strength be compar'd to Locke, Newton, and Boyle?
'Let them rally their heroes, send forth all their pow'rs,
'Their verse-men and prose-men; then match them with ours:
'First Shakespeare and Milton, like Gods in the fight,
'Have put their whole drama and epic to flight;

'In ſatires, epiſtles, and odes, would they cope,
'Their numbers retreat before Dryden and Pope;
'And Johnſon, well-arm'd like a hero of yore,
'Has beat forty* French, and will beat forty more.'

It has already been mentioned, that Johnſon's inducement to this undertaking was the offer of a liberal reward. The term liberal is indefinite, and, after the lapſe of twenty years, during which ſuch ſums as from three to eight thouſand pounds have been paid for copies, would hardly be allowed to fifteen hundred and ſeventy-five †, which was the ſum ſtipulated for the dictionary. Of this, Johnſon, who was no very accurate accountant, thought a great part would be coming to him on the concluſion of the work; but upon producing, at a tavern-meeting for the purpoſe of ſettling, receipts for ſums advanced to him, which were indeed the chief means of his ſubſiſtence, it was found, not only that he had eaten his cake, but that the balance of the account was greatly againſt him. His debtors were now become his creditors; but they, in a perfect conſiſtency with that liberal ſpirit, which, in ſundry inſtances, the great booksellers are known to have exerciſed towards authors, remitted the difference, and conſoled him for his diſappointment by making his entertainment at the tavern a treat §. The

* The number of the French academy employed in ſettling their language.

† From the original contract now in my hand, dated 18th June 1746, between Johnſon on the one part, and the two Knaptons, the two Longmans, Charles Hitch, Andrew Millar, and Robert Dodſley on the other.

§ Mr. William Caſlon the letter-founder, grandfather of the preſent

The pointing out the utility of ſuch a work as a vernacular lexicon is needleſs, and the diſplaying the merits of that of which I am ſpeaking, is a labour which the ſuffrage of the public has ſaved me. The learned world had long wiſhed for its appearance, and the circulation of the book was proportionate to the impatience which the promiſe of it had excited. Lord Corke, being at Florence at the time when it was publiſhed, preſented it, in the author's name, to the academy della Cruſca, and that learned body tranſmitted to him a fine copy of their Vocabulario. The French academy alſo ſignified their approbation of his labours, by a preſent of their Dictionnaire, of which Mr. Langton was the bearer. To theſe teſtimonies of public reſpect, it is a ſmall but ludicrous addition to ſay, that Dr. Robertſon, the Scots hiſtorian, told Johnſon, that he had fairly peruſed his dictionary twice over, and that Johnſon was pleaſed at the hearing it. The dictionary was a library-book, and not adapted to common uſe: the bookſellers knowing this, and being encouraged by its ſucceſs, eaſily prevailed on the author to abridge it in two octavo volumes, and made him a liberal recompence.

It was doubtleſs a great ſatisfaction to Johnſon to have completed this great work; and though we may

preſent Mr. Caſlon, once told me, that the bookſellers with whom Mr. Chambers had contracted for his dictionary, finding that the work ſucceeded beyond their expectations, made him a voluntary preſent of, I think, 500l. Other inſtances of the like generoſity have been known of a profeſſion of men, who, in the debates of the queſtion of literary property, have been deſcribed as ſcandalous monopolizers, fattening at the expence of other mens' ingenuity, and growing opulent by oppreſſion.

believe

believe him in the declaration at the end of the preface thereto, that he diſmiſſed it with frigid tranquility, we cannot but ſuppoſe that he was pleaſed with the reception it met with. One and only one writer, excited by that envy and malice which had been long rankling in his breaſt, attempted to diſturb the quiet which poſſeſſed him, by animadverting on this and other of his writings: this was a Dr. Kenrick, the author of many ſcurrilous publications now deſervedly forgotten, who, in a ſmall volume intitled 'Lexiphanes,' endeavoured to turn many paſſages in the Rambler, and interpretations in the dictionary, into ridicule; gratifying his ſpleen alſo with a number of malevolent cenſures of Dr. Akenſide's 'Pleaſures of Imagination.' It was the purpoſe of this libel to provoke both or one of the perſons who were the ſubjects of it, to a controverſy, from which, whatever ſhould be the event, he hoped, as it is ſaid Ulyſſes did in his conteſt with Ajax, to derive honour.

'Iſte tulit pretium jam nunc certaminis hujus,
'Quo cum victus erit, mecum certaſſe feretur.'
OVID. Met. lib. xiii. v. 19.

'Loſing he wins, becauſe his name will be
'Ennobled by defeat, who durſt contend with me.'
DRYDEN.

But in this he was diſappointed. Akenſide was too proud to diſpute with an inferior, and Johnſon's ſilence proceeded not more from his contempt of ſuch an adverſary, than from a ſettled reſolution he had formed, of declining all controverſy in defence either of himſelf or his writings. Againſt perſonal

abuſe

abuſe he was ever armed, by a reflection, that I have heard him utter: 'Alas! reputation would be of 'little worth, were it in the power of every concealed 'enemy to deprive us of it;'—and he defied all attacks on his writings, by an anſwer of Dr. Bentley to one who threatened to write him down,—that 'no author 'was ever written down but by himſelf.'

His ſteady perſeverance in this reſolution afforded him great ſatisfaction whenever he reflected on it; and he would often felicitate himſelf, that, throughout his life, he had had firmneſs enough to treat with contempt the calumny and abuſe as well of open as concealed enemies, and the malevolence of thoſe anonymous ſcriblers, whoſe trade is ſlander, and wages infamy.

Had Pope purſued the ſame conduct, and forborne his revenge on Theobald, Cibber, and others who had provoked him, he had enjoyed his muſe and that philoſophical tranquility which he did but affect, and lived and died with dignity. The younger Richardſon once told me, that, upon the publication of Cibber's ſecond letter, he came to his father's houſe in Lincoln's-inn fields, and, upon entering the room where he was painting, with a countenance that ſpoke the anguiſh of his ſoul, exclaimed, 'So, I find another letter is come out:' but, continued he, 'ſuch things are ſport to me:' in which aſſertion we may ſuppoſe him to be as ſincere as that poet of whom a ſtory goes, that, talking with a friend, of the critics, he ſaid, he had a way of dealing with them; for, whenever they condemned his verſes, he laughed at it. 'Do you ſo?' ſays his friend, 'then, let me tell

'you,

'you, you live the merrieſt life of any man in Eng-
'land.'

That Bentley's obſervation is founded in truth and a knowledge of mankind, is proved by the rank which Sir Richard Blackmore now holds among the Engliſh poets. At the time when he lived, the wits were in confederacy againſt him; and ſo many are the lampoons, epigrams, and other ſatirical compoſitions extant, tending to blaſt his reputation as a poet*, that the reader of them would incline to think, that in all his works there is ſcarce a good line or ſentiment. All this, as Johnſon relates, Blackmore foreſaw, and, with a dignity of mind that merits praiſe, deſpiſed: the conſequence is, that his poem, intitled 'Creation,' is not written down, but yet lives in the eſteem of every judicious reader, and in that moſt elegant encomium, which Mr. Addiſon has beſtowed on it in the Spectator †; and Dennis, one of the ſevereſt of critics, has given it greater praiſe than he ever vouchſafed to any modern compoſition, ſaying, that it is 'a 'philoſophical poem, which has equalled that of Lu-'cretius in the beauty of its verſification, and infinitely 'ſurpaſſed it in the ſolidity and ſtrength of its rea-'ſoning.'

To be inſenſible of, and undiſturbed by, the envy and malice of others, is one of the ſtrongeſt proofs of a great mind, and, as it is the moſt juſtifiable, ſo is it the ſevereſt revenge we can take; for what ſight can be more ridiculous, than that of a crea-

* See the works of Mr. Thomas Brown, in 4 vols. 12mo. and Pope and Swift's miſcellany.

† No. 339.

ture

ture venting its rage on a ſubject that cannot feel? To live in the dread of ſlander, and to regulate our conduct by the opinions, the whiſpers, the ſurmiſes, or threats of either fooliſh or wicked men, is the worſt of all ſlavery: of him who cannot defy every attempt of this kind to diſturb his peace, but muſt be whining and complaining of that enmity which, perhaps, does him honour, and ſcribbling to refute thoſe calumnies which no one will believe, it may be ſaid, as we ſay of a man labouring under a mortal diſeaſe: 'He is no man for this world.' If he chooſes a contrary courſe to that above-recommended, he does the work of thoſe that hate him, and will be ſure to feel the pangs of reſentment, and forego the enjoyment of a tranquil mind, and a conſcience void of offence, ſo feelingly deſcribed in this ſentence of lord Bacon: 'Certainly it is heaven 'upon earth to have a man's mind move in Charity, 'reſt in Providence, and turn upon the poles of 'Truth.'

If Johnſon could ever be ſaid to be idle, now was the time. He had, for nine years, been employed in his great work, and had finiſhed it: he had cloſed the Rambler; and the Adventurer was cloſed on him. He had it now in his choice to reaſſume ſome one or other of thoſe various literary projects, which he had formed in the early part of his life, and are enumerated in a foregoing page of theſe memoirs; but the powers of his mind, diſtended by long and ſevere exerciſe, became relaxed, and required reſt to bring them to their tone, and it was ſome time before he could reſolve on any employment, ſuited to his abilities, that carried with it any proſpect of pleaſure,

or

or hope of reward. This remiſſion of his labour, which ſeemed to be no more than nature herſelf called for, Johnſon, in thoſe ſevere audits to which it was his practice to ſummon himſelf, would frequently condemn, ſtyling it a waſte of his time, and a miſapplication of the talents with which he was gratefully conſcious that God had endowed him. Yet herein was he greatly miſtaken; for though Milton ſays of the ſervants of God,

'——————— thouſands at his bidding ſpeed,
'And poſt o'er land and ocean without reſt;'

he adds, that

'They alſo ſerve who only ſtand and wait.'
Sonnet on his blindneſs.

Johnſon's intellectual faculties could never be unemployed: when he was not writing he was thinking, and his thoughts had ever a tendency to the good of mankind; and that indolence, which, in his hours of contrition, he cenſured as criminal, needed little expiation.

This receſs from literary occupation continued, however, no longer than was abſolutely neceſſary. It has already been ſhewn, that he was not only a friend to ſuch vehicles of literary intelligence as Magazines and other epitomes of large works, but that he was a frequent contributor to them. He had occaſionally, for Cave's Magazine, written the lives of Father Paul Sarpi, Boerhaave, the admirals Drake and Blake, Barretier, and divers other eminent perſons; and alſo, ſundry philological eſſays,

eſſays, particularly a ſtate of the controverſy between Crouſaz and Warburton reſpecting the 'Eſſay on Man,' and a viſion intitled 'the Apotheoſis of Milton.' Cave being now dead, he ceaſed to furniſh articles for that publication, and either voluntarily offered, or ſuffered himſelf to be retained as a writer in others of a like kind: accordingly, in 1756, he wrote for 'the Univerſal Viſitor, or Monthly Memorialiſt,' printed for Gardner *, two of three letters therein inſerted, on the ſubject of agriculture; and in the ſame and ſubſequent year, he aſſumed or ſubmitted to the office of a reviewer, as it is called, for the publiſher of a monthly collection, intitled, 'The Literary Magazine,' of which one Faden, a printer, was the editor. In this he wrote the addreſs to the public; alſo, reviews of the following books, viz. Soame Jenyns's free enquiry into the nature and origin of evil; Dr. Blackwell's Memoirs of the court of Auguſtus; he wrote alſo therein, Obſervations on the ſtate of affairs in 1756, and the Life of the preſent king of Pruſſia; and, Hanway's journal coming in his way, which contained in it a ſevere cenſure of the practice of tea-drinking, he officially, as I may ſay, and with a degree of alacrity proportioned to his avowed love of that liquor, undertook to criticiſe the book, and refute the arguments of the author.

To render this controverſy intelligible, it is neceſſary I ſhould ſtate the grounds on which it proceeded.—Mr. Jonas Hanway had, in the year 1755, undertaken and

* The writers in this publication were, Chriſtopher Smart, Richard Rolt, Mr. Garrick, and Dr. Percy, now biſhop of Dromore. Their papers are ſigned with the initials of their ſurnames; Johnſon's have this mark * *.

performed

performed a journey from Portſmouth to Kingſton upon Thames, through Southampton, Wiltſhire, &c. which, though completed in the ſpace of eight days, and attended with no extraordinary circumſtances, was, it ſeems, in his judgment, worthy of being recorded, and, by means of the preſs, tranſmitted to poſterity; and accordingly he gave a relation of it to the public, in two octavo volumes. It may be needleſs to ſay, that this work abounds with miſcellaneous thoughts, moral and religious, and alſo political reflections; for of which of all his numerous productions cannot the ſame be ſaid? Connected with it is 'An 'Eſſay on Tea, conſidered as pernicious to health, 'obſtructing induſtry, and impoveriſhing the nation, 'with an account of its growth, and great conſump-'tion in theſe kingdoms *.'

As

* Mr. Hanway ſeems not very accurate in his ſtate of the time when tea was firſt brought into England. He ſays, that lord Arlington and lord Oſſory introduced it in 1666, and that it was then admired as a new thing. Waller has a poem addreſſed to the queen, Maria d'Eſte, wife of Ja. II. in 1683, 'On tea 'commended by her majeſty,' whereby it ſeems, that even then it was a new thing.

It is a queſtion of ſome curioſity, and worthy inveſtigation, what were the viands of a morning meal with people of condition, for which tea with its concomitants is now the ſubſtitute; and I am glad to be able to reſolve it by the following extract from the Northumberland houſhold book, in which is contained the regulations and eſtabliſhment of the houſhold of Henry Algernon Percy, the fifth earl of Northumberland, at his caſtles of Wreſill and Leckinfield in Yorkſhire, begun anno domini 1512.

'Braikfaſtis for FLESCH DAYS.

'Braikfaſtis for my Lorde and my lady.

Furſt, a loof of brede in trenchors, 2 manchetts, 1 quart of

As I do not mean to follow this author in the courſe of an argument conducted in no method, interrupted by a redundancy of foreign matter, and which violates every rule in logic, I ſhall content myſelf with remarking, that though every one of his three aſſertions may be true, he has ſucceeded in the proof of no one of them. That tea is a luxury, and not a fit aliment for the poor, is implied in a ſarcaſm of Swift to this purpoſe, that the world muſt be encompaſſed, that is to ſay, by a voyage to the Eaſt Indies for tea, and another to the Weſt for ſugar,

' of bere, a quart of wine, half a chyne of mutton, or ells a chyne ' of beif boiled.

' Braikfaſtis for the Nurcy, for my Lady Margaret, ' and Mr. Yngram Percy.

' Item, a manchet, 1 quarte of bere, and 3 muton bonys ' boiled.

' Braikfaſtis for my Ladys Gentylwomen.

' Item, a loif of houſhold breid, a pottell of beire, and 3 muton ' bonys boyled, or ells a pece of beif boiled.

' LENT.

' Braikfaſte for my Lorde and my Lady.

' Furſt, a loif of brede in trenchors, 2 manchets, a quart of ' bere, a quart of wyne, 2 pecys of ſaltfiſch, 6 baconn'd herrying, ' 4 white herring or a dyſche of ſproits.

' Braikfaſte for the Nurcy, for my Lady Margaret, ' and Maiſter Ingeram Percy.

' Item, a manchet, a quarte of bere, a dyſch of butter, a pece ' of ſaltfiſch, a diſch of ſproits, or 3 white herrying.

' Braikfaſte for my Ladis Gentyllwomen.

' Item, a loof of brede, a pottell of bere, a pece of ſaltfiſche, or ' 3 white herrynge.'

before a waſherwoman can ſit down to breakfaſt. That it is pernicious to health is diſputed by phyſicians: Quincy commends it, as an elegant and wholeſome beverage; Cheyne condemns it, as prejudicial to the nervous ſyſtem. Biſhop Burnet, for many years, drank ſixteen large cups of it every morning, and never complained that it did him the leaſt injury. The two laſt objections, that tea is an obſtruction to induſtry, and that it impoveriſhes the nation, are political queſtions which I am not able to decide upon.

Epictetus ſomewhere adviſes us to conſider the gratification of the calls of hunger and thirſt, as acts of neceſſity; to be performed as it were by the by, but by no means to be eſtimated among the enjoyments of life; and by a precept no leſs than divine, we are exhorted to take no thought what we ſhall eat or what we ſhall drink. Johnſon looked upon the former as a very ſerious buſineſs, and enjoyed the pleaſures of a ſplendid table equally with moſt men. It was, at no time of his life, pleaſing to ſee him at a meal: the greedineſs with which he ate, his total inattention to thoſe among whom he was ſeated, and his profound ſilence in the hour of refection, were circumſtances that at the inſtant degraded him, and ſhewed him to be more a ſenſualiſt than a philoſopher. Moreover, he was a lover of tea to an exceſs hardly credible; whenever it appeared, he was almoſt raving, and by his impatience to be ſerved, his inceſſant calls for thoſe ingredients which make that liquor palatable, and the haſte with which he ſwallowed it down, he ſeldom failed to make that a fatigue to every one elſe, which was intended as a general refreſhment. Such

ſigns

ſigns of effeminacy as theſe, ſuited but ill with the appearance of a man, who, for his bodily ſtrength and ſtature, has been compared to Polyphemus.

This foible in Johnſon's character being known, it will excite no wonder in the reader to be told, that he readily embraced the opportunity of defending his own practice, by an examen of Hanway's book. Accordingly, he began his remarks on it in the Literary Magazine, Number VII *, but receiving from this author an injunction to forbear proceeding in his cenſure till a ſecond edition ſhould appear, he ſubmitted, though it was a prohibition that could neither be reaſonably impoſed, nor by any means inforced; yet, ſuch was its effect, that Mr. Hanway's journal was not remarked on, till he had been allowed every advantage that could protect it from cenſure.

Such candour on the part of him, on whoſe opinion perhaps many were waiting to form theirs, might have relieved the author from any dread of unfair treatment; but Johnſon, who paid all proper deference to good intentions, did not think this tacit indication of the temper in which he ſat down to review Mr Hanway's journal, ſufficient: he, therefore, in reſuming the diſpute, promiſes him, that he ſhall find no malignity of cenſure, and draws a very handſome inference from the contents of his thirty-two letters, that he is a man whoſe failings may well be pardoned for his virtues.

The criticiſm on this ſecond edition appeared in the Literary Magazine, Number XIII †, and extends

* From 15th Oct. to 15th Nov. 1756.

† From 15th April to 15th May, 1757.

chiefly to Mr. Hanway's arguments againſt tea and gin: ſubjects which ſeem to have inſpired him with ſuch enthuſiaſtic eloquence as diſdained all the rules of logic, and dictated obſervations and concluſions, ſo incoherent and incongruous, as would have ſtimulated even thoſe, who, in the main, thought with him, to an endeavour at correcting his judgment.

But, in Johnſon, when writing on the qualities of tea, he met with an opponent on principle; for its antagoniſt's hatred, however radical or zealous, could not exceed the love its champion bore it: he deſcribes himſelf as 'a hardened and ſhameleſs tea-drinker, 'who has, for many years, diluted his meals with 'only the infuſion of this faſcinating plant; whoſe 'kettle has ſcarcely time to cool; who, with tea 'amuſes the evening, with tea ſolaces the mid-'nights, and with tea welcomes the morning.'

That Mr. Hanway was right in aſſerting, that the practice of drinking tea is productive of harm among the lower claſſes of people, muſt certainly be admitted; and that Johnſon was right in denying that it has all the poiſonous qualities the Journal attributes to it, experience ſhews. From what has been ſaid on both ſides, little can be inferred, but that to ſome it is noxious, and to others neutral; that thoſe do wrong who perſiſt in the uſe of it when they find it injurious to their health, and that ſuch as cannot afford the neceſſaries of life, ought not to indulge in its luxuries.

At Johnſon's candid examen, which ſhould not have offended Mr. Hanway, as, by ſubmitting his work to public inſpection, he recognized the right of public criticiſm, the latter was extremely irritated, and very

very unadviſedly drew his reviewer forth to a ſecond exertion of his argumentative powers, printed in the ſame Magazine, vol. ii. 253, under the title of 'A 'reply to a paper in the Gazetteer of May 26, 1757,' in which, with ſeeming contrition and mock penitence he requeſts to know how he has offended, and deprecates the wrath he had excited.——'There are only 'three ſubjects,' ſays he, 'upon which my unlucky 'pen has happened to venture. Tea, the author of 'the Journal, and the Foundling hoſpital.'

'Of the author, I unfortunately ſaid, that his in-'junction was too magiſterial. This I ſaid, before I 'knew he was a governor of the foundlings; but he 'ſeems inclined to puniſh this failure of reſpect, as 'the czar of Muſcovy made war upon Sweden, be-'cauſe he was not treated with ſufficient honours when 'he paſſed through the country in diſguiſe. Yet was 'not this irreverence without extenuation. Something 'was ſaid of the merit of *meaning well*, and the journa-'liſt was declared to be a man *whoſe failings might well* '*be pardoned for his virtues*. This is the higheſt praiſe 'which human gratitude can confer upon human 'merit, praiſe that would have more than ſatisfied '*Titus* or *Auguſtus*, but which I muſt own to be ina-'dequate and penurious, when offered to the member 'of an important corporation.'

His juſtification of what he ſaid of the author, he concludes thus:——'As the journaliſt, though en-'thuſiaſtically zealous for his country, has, with regard 'to ſmaller things, the placid happineſs of philoſo-'phical indifference, I can give him no diſturbance 'by adviſing him to reſtrain even the love of his 'country within due limits, leſt it ſhould ſometimes

'ſwell too high, fill the whole capacity of his ſoul, 'and leave leſs room for the love of truth.'

Unluckily for Mr. Hanway it happened, that while he was labouring for the general good, by reprobating the practice of drinking tea, an inſtitution from which he derived much of his importance, was ſuffering from want of care. Johnſon, in a viſit to the Foundling hoſpital, obſerved, that the objects of the charity, however well provided for in other reſpects, were, in the eſſential point of religious knowledge, lamentably deficient. To him, who conſidered wiſely that there was no evil from which the governors of the Foundling hoſpital could reſcue deſerted infants, ſo much to be dreaded as ignorance of this kind, the anſwers given to his enquiries touching their improvement were very unſatisfactory. Without knowing that Mr. Hanway was concerned in the charge, he, in his former letter had ſtated this fact, and followed it by ſaying, that 'to breed up children in this manner, is 'to reſcue them from an early grave, that they may 'find employment for the gibbet, from dying in in-'nocence, that they may periſh by their crimes.'

The laudable motive which induced Johnſon to point out this neglect, and the juſtice of his remark, did not ſhield him from unmerited reſentment. He was called on to ſupport what he had advanced: his aſſertion was branded with the epithet of *incredible*, but his obſervation had produced its effect: he had found means to have it repreſented to one of the higheſt names of the ſociety, and a catechiſt was ſoon after appointed.

On a review of the eloquence he had been forced to encounter, he ſays of his adverſary,——'His argu-'mentation,

'mentation, being ſomewhat enthuſiaſtical, I cannot 'fully comprehend, but it ſeems to ſtand thus. My 'inſinuations are fooliſh or malicious, ſince I know 'not one of the governors of the hoſpital; for he 'that knows not the governors of the hoſpital muſt 'be very fooliſh or malicious.

'He has, however, ſo much kindneſs for me, that 'he adviſes me to conſult my own ſafety when I talk 'of corporations. I know not what the moſt impor-'tant corporation could do, becoming manhood, 'by which my ſafety is endangered. My reputation 'is ſafe, for I can prove the fact; my quiet is ſafe, 'for I meant well; and for any other ſafety, I am not 'uſed to be very ſolicitous.

'I am always ſorry when I ſee any being labouring 'in vain; and, in return for the journaliſt's attention 'to my ſafety, I will confeſs ſome compaſſion for his 'tumultuous reſentment; ſince all his invectives fume 'into the air, with ſo little effect upon me, that I ſtill 'eſteem him as one that has the *merit of meaning well*, 'and ſtill believe him to be *a man whoſe failings may 'be juſtly pardoned for his virtues.*'

Whoever peruſes this controverſy, will be forced to confeſs that, on the part of Johnſon, it is conducted, not only with candour, but with great good humour, a circumſtance to be remarked in all his polemical writings, and to be wondered at, ſeeing that in oral diſputation his behaviour was ſo different, as to expoſe him to the ſevereſt cenſures. His exertions againſt his adverſary were play, not hoſtility;

'Sporting the lion ramp'd, and in his paw
'Dandled the kid.'

Paradiſe Loſt, book iv. line 343.

By the virtues of Mr. Hanway, which Johnſon is ſo ready to acknowledge, we are to underſtand, that active and unwearied benevolence, which, for a ſeries of years, he has been exerciſing for the benefit of ſociety, and by his failings, or rather failing, for I know of but one he has, a propenſity to writing and publiſhing books, which, for the triteneſs and inanity of the ſentiments contained in them, no one can read.

About the year 1756, time had produced a change in the ſituation of many of Johnſon's friends, who were uſed to meet him in Ivy lane. Death had taken from us M'Ghie; Barker went to ſettle as a practiſing phyſician at Trowbridge; Dyer went abroad; Hawkeſworth was buſied in forming new connections; and I had lately made one that removed from me all temptations to paſs my evenings from home. The conſequence was, that our ſympoſium at the King's head broke up, and he who had firſt formed us into a ſociety was left with fewer around him than were able to ſupport it.

All this while, the bookſellers, who by his own confeſſion were his beſt friends, had their eyes upon Johnſon, and reflected with ſome concern on what ſeemed to them a miſapplication of his talents. The furniſhing magazines, reviews, and even newspapers, with literary intelligence, and the authors of books, who could not write them for themſelves, with dedications and prefaces, they looked on as employments beneath him, who had attained to ſuch eminence as a writer; they, therefore, in the year 1756, found out for him ſuch a one as ſeemed to afford a proſpect both of amuſement and profit: this was an edition of Shakeſpeare's dramatic works, which,

ich, by a concurrence of circumſtances, was now ome neceſſary, to anſwer the increaſing demand of public for the writings of that author.

Mr. Garrick, who, as every one knows, was in all t related to Shakeſpeare an enthuſiaſt, had, by the dy of his principal characters, and his own exqui- action, ſo recommended Shakeſpeare to the town, t the admiration of him became general even to ctation; many profeſſing to be delighted with the formance and peruſal of his plays, who, from ir want of literature, and their ignorance of the aſeology of the age in which they were written, ild not be ſuppoſed capable of conſtruing them. hers there were, in whom a literary curioſity had n excited, by the publication of ſuch editions of this hor as tended to ſettle his text, and by a deſcription ancient manners and cuſtoms of living, to render n intelligible. The firſt eſſay of this kind, worth ing, was the edition of Theobald, the defects where- in the ſingle opinion of Warburton, were ſo many l great, as to render that neceſſary which bears his ne.

The two claſſes of readers, here diſcriminated, ounted to ſuch a number as encouraged the okſellers to an edition on the plan of the two mer, and Johnſon was the perſon, whom, of all ers, they thought the fitteſt to undertake it: the ns ſettled between them were, that Johnſon ſhould eive for his own uſe the profits ariſing from a ſcription to the firſt impreſſion, and that the by-right ſhould remain with the then poſſeſſors. e firſt notification of this deſign was, a propoſal

drawn

drawn up by Johnſon, ſetting forth the incorrectneſs of the early editions, the original obſcurity and ſubſequent corruptions of the text, the neceſſity of notes, and the failures of former editors.

A ſtranger to Johnſon's character and temper would have thought, that the ſtudy of an author, whoſe ſkill in the ſcience of human life was ſo deep, and whoſe perfections were ſo many and various as to be above the reach of all praiſe, muſt have been the moſt pleaſing employment that his imagination could ſuggeſt, but it was not ſo: in a viſit that he one morning made to me, I congratulated him on his being now engaged in a work that ſuited his genius, and that, requiring none of that ſevere application which his dictionary had condemned him to, I doubted not would be executed con amore.——His anſwer was, 'I look upon 'this as I did upon the dictionary: it is all work, and 'my inducement to it is not love or deſire of fame, 'but the want of money, which is the only motive 'to writing that I know of.'——And the event was evidence to me, that in this ſpeech he declared his genuine ſentiments; for neither in the firſt place did he ſet himſelf to collect early editions of his author, old plays, tranſlations of hiſtories, and of the claſſics, and other materials neceſſary for his purpoſe, nor could he be prevailed on to enter into that courſe of reading, without which it ſeemed impoſſible to come at the ſenſe of his author. It was provoking to all his friends to ſee him waſte his days, his weeks, and his months ſo long, that they feared a mental lethargy had ſeized him, out of which he would never recover. In this, however, they were happily deceived, for, after

two years inactivity, they find him rouſed to action, and engaged—not in the proſecution of the work, for the completion whereof he ſtood doubly bound, but in a new one, the furniſhing a ſeries of periodical eſſays, intitled, and it may be thought not improperly, 'The Idler,' as his motive to the employment was averſion to a labour he had undertaken, though in the execution, it muſt be owned, it merited a better name.

As Johnſon was diverted from his work of Shakeſpeare, ſo am I from my purpoſe of tracing the progreſs of it, being to relate the occurrences of nine years of his life before I can congratulate the reader on its appearance.

The engagement for the Idler was with Newbery the bookſeller, a man of a projecting head, a good underſtanding, and great integrity; and who, by a fortunate connection with Dr. James the phyſician, and the honeſt exertions of his own induſtry, became the founder of a family. Taking advantage of that rage for intelligence, which the ſucceſſes of the war had excited, in even the loweſt order of the people, he planned a weekly paper, which he called 'The Univerſal Chronicle,' and, as the ſize of it rendered it ſuſceptible of more matter than the occurrences, during the intervals of its publication, would ſupply, it was part of his ſcheme, that it ſhould contain an eſſay or ſhort diſcourſe on ſuch ſubjects of morality, or of wit and humour, as, in former inſtances, had been found to engage the attention of the public. A ſhare in the profits of this paper was Johnſon's inducement to the furniſhing ſuch a diſcourſe, and, accordingly, it appeared, on Saturday the fifteenth day

of

of April 1758, and continued to be publiſhed on the ſame day in every week for near two years thence following.

The profits accruing from the ſale of this paper, and the ſubſcriptions which, from the year 1756, he was receiving for the edition of Shakeſpeare by him propoſed, were the only known means of his ſubſiſtence for a period of near four years, and we may ſuppoſe them hardly adequate to his wants, for, upon finding the balance of the account for the dictionary againſt him, he quitted his houſe in Gough ſquare, and took chambers in Gray's inn; and Mrs. Williams, upon this removal, fixed herſelf in lodgings at a boarding-ſchool in the neighbourhood of their former dwelling.

About this time he had, from a friend who highly eſteemed him*, the offer of a living, of which he might have rendered himſelf capable by entering into holy orders: it was a rectory, in a pleaſant country, and of ſuch a yearly value as might have tempted one in better circumſtances than himſelf to accept it; but he had ſcruples about the duties of the miniſterial function, that he could not, after deliberation, overcome. 'I have not,' ſaid he, 'the requiſites for the 'office, and I cannot, in my conſcience, ſhear that 'flock which I am unable to feed.'—Upon converſing with him on that inability which was his reaſon for declining the offer, it was found to be a ſuſpicion of his patience to undergo the fatigue of catechiſing and inſtructing a great number of poor ignorant perſons,

* Mr. Langton, of Langton in Lincolnſhire, the father of his much-beloved friend Bennet Langton, Eſq; mentioned in the codicil to his will, and huſband of the counteſs dowager of Rothes.

who,

who, in religious matters, had, perhaps, every thing to learn.

Thus ſcrupulouſly did he think of the nature of the miniſterial office, and thus did he teſtify the ſincerity of thoſe cenſures, which he would ſometimes paſs on the conduct of the generality of the clergy of his time; for though, as a body of men, he held them in great veneration, and was ever ready to defend them againſt the encroachments of ſome, and the reproaches of others of the ignorant laity, he exacted from all who had the cure of ſouls a punctilious diſcharge of their duty, and held in utter deteſtation thoſe who, renouncing their garb and clerical character, affected to appear men of the world.

He thought of Dr. Clarke, whoſe ſermons he valued above all other, that he complied too frequently with invitations to dine with perſons of high rank, his pariſhioners, and ſpent too much of his time in ceremonious viſits: differing in this reſpect from his contemporary Smalridge, the elegant Favonius of the Tatler, who, in the height of his reputation as a preacher, was ever ready to viſit a ſick perſon in the moſt obſcure alley of Weſtminſter.

In the beginning of the year 1759, and while the Idler continued to be publiſhed, an event happened, for which it might be imagined he was well prepared, the death of his mother, who had then attained the age of ninety; but he, whoſe mind had acquired no firmneſs by the contemplation of mortality, was as little able to ſuſtain the ſhock as he would have been had this loſs befallen him in his nonage. It is conjectured that, for many years before her deceaſe, ſhe derived almoſt the whole of her ſupport from this her

her dutiful ſon, whoſe filial piety was ever one of the moſt diſtinguiſhable features in his character *. Report ſays, but rather vaguely, that, to ſupply her neceſſities in her laſt illneſs, he wrote and made money of his 'Raſſelas,' a tale of his invention, numbered among the beſt of his writings, and publiſhed in the ſpring of 1759, a criſis that gives credit to ſuch a ſuppoſition. No. 41 of the Idler, though it pretends to be a letter to the author, was written by Johnſon himſelf, on occaſion of his mother's death, and may be ſuppoſed to deſcribe, as truly as pathetically, his ſentiments on the ſeparation of friends and relations. The fact, reſpecting the writing and publiſhing the ſtory of Raſſelas is, that finding the Eaſtern Tales written by himſelf in the Rambler, and by Hawkeſworth in the Adventurer, had been well received, he had been for ſome time meditating a fictitious hiſtory, of a greater extent than any that had appeared in either of thoſe papers, which might ſerve as a vehicle to convey to the world his ſentiments of human life and the diſpenſations of Providence, and having digeſted his thoughts on the ſubject, he obeyed the ſpur of that neceſſity which now preſſed him, and ſat down to compoſe the tale abovementioned, laying the ſcene of it in a country that he had before occaſion to contemplate, in his tranſlation of Padre Lobo's voyage.

As it was written to raiſe money, he did not long delay diſpoſing of it; he gave it, as I have been told, to Mr. Barett, to ſell to that bookſeller who would

* I find in his diary a note of the payment to Mr. Allen the printer, of ten guineas, which he had borrowed of him, and ſent to his dying mother.

give

give moſt for it, but the ſum he got for it is variouſly reported. As none of his compoſitions have been more applauded than this, an examen of it in this place may not be improper, and the following may ſerve till a better ſhall appear.

Conſidered as a ſpecimen of our language, it is ſcarcely to be paralleled: it is written in a ſtyle refined to a degree of immaculate purity, and diſplays the whole force of turgid eloquence.

But it was compoſed at a time when no ſpring like that in the mind of Raſſelas urged his narrator; when the heavy hand of affliction almoſt bore him down, and the dread of future want haunted him. That he ſhould have produced a tale fraught with lively imagery, or that he ſhould have painted human life in gay colours, could not have been expected: he poured out his ſorrow in gloomy reflection, and being deſtitute of comfort himſelf, deſcribed the world as nearly without it.

In a work of ſuch latitude as this, where nothing could be impertinent, he had an opportunity of divulging his opinion on any point that he had thought on: he has therefore formed many converſations on topics that are known to have been ſubjects of his meditation, and has atoned for the paucity of his incidents by ſuch diſcuſſions as are ſeldom attempted by the fabricators of romantic fiction.

Admitting that Johnſon ſpeaks in the perſon of the victor-diſputant, we may, while he is unveiling the hearts of others, gain ſome knowledge of his own. He has in this Abyſſinian tale given us what he calls a diſſertation on poetry, and in it that which appears to me

me a recipe for making a poet, from which may be inferred what he thought the neceſſary ingredients, and a reference to the paſſage will tend to corroborate an obſervation of Mr. Garrick's, that Johnſon's poetical faculty was mechanical, and that what he wrote came not from his heart but from his head. Imlac, the guide of the prince, relates to him the events of his life, which are—That his father was a wealthy merchant, but a man of uncultivated intellects, who left the choice of a profeſſion, with very little biaſs, to his ſon. The young man was diſguſted with trade, and inclined to general learning; but finding, as he ſays, that poetry was conſidered as the higheſt learning, and regarded with veneration, he determined to become a poet. Ambition has ſeldom effected ſo ſtupendous a work as that of implanting poetic genius; but Imlac was reſolved, and, if we may truſt the account of his ſucceſs, his deſign was not abſurd: his induſtry was very commendable: he red all the poets of Arabia and Perſia, and was able to repeat by memory the volumes that are ſuſpended in the moſque of Mecca: he then ranged mountains and deſarts for images and reſemblances, and pictured on his mind every tree of the foreſt and flower of the valley: an ample collection drawn from rocks, palaces, rivulets, clouds, &c. ſtored his mind, and with the help of ethics, languages, and ſciences, the reſolute Imlac, who, till the age of twenty, had lived in ignorance, was by dint of mere induſtry transformed into a diſtinguiſhed poet.

In the courſe of Imlac's narrative, Johnſon animadverts on the ſuppoſed efficacy of pilgrimages: his

his argument decides nothing, but is conceived in ſuch language, that none, how well acquainted ſoever with the book, will blame the inſertion of it here.

'Pilgrimages, like many other acts of piety, may 'be reaſonable or ſuperſtitious, according to the prin- 'ciples upon which they are performed. Long 'journeys in ſearch of truth are not commanded. 'Truth, ſuch as is neceſſary to the regulation of 'life, is always found where it is honeſtly ſought. 'Change of place is no natural cauſe of the increaſe 'of piety, for it inevitably produces diſſipation of 'mind. Yet, ſince men go every day to view the 'fields where great actions have been performed, and 'return with ſtronger impreſſions of the event, curio- 'ſity of the ſame kind may naturally diſpoſe us to view 'that country whence our religion had its beginning; 'and I believe no man ſurveys thoſe awful ſcenes 'without ſome confirmation of holy reſolutions. 'That the Supreme Being may be more eaſily 'propitiated in one place than in another, is the 'dream of idle ſuperſtition; but that ſome places 'may operate upon our own minds in an uncommon 'manner, is an opinion which hourly experience 'will juſtify. He who ſuppoſes that his vices may 'be more ſucceſsfully combated in Paleſtine, will, 'perhaps, find himſelf miſtaken, yet he may go 'thither without folly: he who thinks they will be 'more freely pardoned, diſhonours at once his reaſon 'and religion.'

In a following chapter the danger of inſanity is the ſubject of debate; and it cannot but excite the pity

of all thoſe who gratefully accept and enjoy Johnſon's endeavours to reform and inſtruct, to reflect that the peril he deſcribes he believed impending over him. That he was conſcious of ſuperior talents will ſurely not be imputed to vanity: how deeply then muſt he have been depreſſed by the conſtant fear that in one moment he might and probably would be, not only deprived of his diſtinguiſhed endowments, but reduced to a ſtate little preferable, in as much as reſpects this world, to that of brutes! He has traced the miſery of inſanity from its cauſe to its effect, and ſeems to aſcribe it to indulgence of imagination: he ſtyles it one of the dangers of ſolitude, and perhaps to this dread and this opinion was his uncommon love of ſociety to be attributed.

His ſuperſtitious ideas of the ſtate of departed ſouls, and belief in ſupernatural agency, were produced by a mental diſeaſe, as impoſſible to be ſhaken off as corporal pain. What it has pleaſed Omnipotence to inflict, we need never ſeek to excuſe; but he has provided againſt the cavils of thoſe who cannot comprehend how a wiſe can ever appear a weak man, by remarking, that there is a natural affinity between melancholy and ſuperſtition.

In characteriſing this performance, it cannot be ſaid, that it vindicates the ways of God to man. It is a general ſatire, repreſenting mankind as eagerly purſuing what experience ſhould have taught them they can never obtain: it expoſes the weakneſſes even of their laudable affections and propenſities, and it reſolves the moſt as well as the moſt trivial of their labours, into folly.

I wiſh

I wiſh I were not warranted in ſaying, that this elegant work is rendered, by its moſt obvious moral, of little benefit to the reader. We would not indeed wiſh to ſee the riſing generation ſo unprofitably employed as the prince of Abyſſinia; but it is equally impolitic to repreſs all hope, and he who ſhould quit his father's houſe in ſearch of a profeſſion, and return unprovided, becauſe he could not find any man pleaſed with his own, would need a better juſtification than that Johnſon, after ſpeculatively ſurveying various modes of life, had judged happineſs unattainable, and choice uſeleſs.

But let thoſe, who, reading Raſſelas in the ſpring of life, are captivated by its author's eloquence, and convinced by his perſpicacious wiſdom that human life and hopes are ſuch as he has depicted them, remember that he ſaw through the medium of adverſity. The concurrent teſtimony of ages has, it is too true, proved, that there is no ſuch thing as worldly felicity; but it has never been proved, that, therefore we are miſerable. Thoſe who look only here for happineſs, have ever been and ever will be diſappointed: it is not change of place, nor even the unbounded gratification of their wiſhes that can relieve them; but if they bend their attention towards the attainment of that felicity we are graciouſly promiſed, they will find no ſuch vacuum as diſtreſſed Raſſelas: the diſcharge of religious and ſocial duties will afford their faculties the occupation he wanted, and the well-founded expectation of future reward will at once ſtimulate and ſupport them.

The tale of Raſſelas was written to anſwer a preſſing neceſſity, and was ſo concluded as to admit of a

continuation; and, in fact, Johnſon had meditated a ſecond part, in which he meant to marry his hero, and place him in a ſtate of permanent felicity, but it fared with this reſolution as it did with that of Dr. Young, who, in his eſtimate of human life, promiſed, as he had given the dark, ſo in a future publication he would diſplay the bright ſide of his ſubject; he never did it, for he had found out that it had no bright ſide, and Johnſon had made much the ſame diſcovery, and that in this ſtate of our exiſtence all our enjoyments are fugacious, and permanent felicity unattainable.

Soon after the publication of Raſſelas, and while he continued to write the Idler, Johnſon was tempted to engage in a controverſy on a ſubject with which, in the courſe of his ſtudies, he had acquired but little knowledge, namely, the comparative ſtrength of arches of different forms; the occaſion of it was, that after the paſſing of the act of parliament for building Black-Friars bridge, a variety of deſigns for it were tendered to the commiſſioners, who, after due conſideration, reduced them to three. In two of theſe deſigns, the conſtruction of the arches was ſemicircular; in the third, exhibited by Mr. Myne a Scotſman, it was elliptical.

Whether Johnſon thought that the author of this laſt propoſal, as being a native of North Britain, merited to be treated as an intruder, or that he was induced by better motives to oppoſe his ſcheme, cannot be determined: this, at leaſt, is certain, that he took up the reſolution before he was qualified to debate the queſtion, for I have it from undoubted authority,

authority, that in order thereto, he procured from a perſon eminently ſkilled in mathematics and the principles of architecture, anſwers to a ſtring of queſtions drawn up by himſelf, touching the comparative ſtrength of ſemicircular and elliptical arches. Theſe I myſelf have ſeen, and the anſwers determine in favour of the ſemicircular.

If the former of the conſiderations above ſuggeſted, was at any time, or in any degree, Johnſon's motive for oppoſing Mr. Mylne, he ought to have reflected, that at a period when we had no better architects than Vanbrugh, Hawkſmoor *, James and Kent among us †, Campbell and Gibbs ‡, both Scotſmen, had adorned this country with ſome ſtately and elegant edifices; and if the latter was his inducement, he ſhould have reflected, that his arguments were

* Vanbrugh and Hawkſmoor had ſuch ideas of beauty and harmony as have no archetypes in the material world: the latter in an evil hour was employed by the commiſſioners for building fifty new churches, as alſo by a pariſh in the city, St. Mary Woolnoth, in the re-edification of an old one, and has left his mark behind him in ſeveral parts of this kingdom.

† James and Kent were mere decorators, and could do little more than deſign a ſaloon, a gallery, or a ſcreen. Kent pretended to hiſtory-painting, but was, after painting an altar-piece or two, become ſo conſcious of his deficiency, that he ſtrove to render painted ſtair-caſes unfaſhionable, by dividing them into compartments of ſtucco, ornamented with groups of fruit and flowers, with other plaſtic ornaments. He had, nevertheleſs, a fine taſte in gardening, and introduced that ſtyle, which now prevails in this kingdom, and ſerves for a model to all Europe.

‡ Campbell and Gibbs were both men of genius; the former deſigned the beſt houſe in this kingdom, that at Wanſted in Eſſex, built by the earl of Caſtlemain; the latter, St. Martin's church, and other edifices that are an honour to his memory.

not his own, and ſo far as regards ſymmetry and correſpondence of parts, how little he was qualified to judge of ſymmetry and the correſpondence of parts, whoſe eye was never capable of comprehending the dome of St. Paul's cathedral, or the towers of Weſtminſter abbey. However, armed as he is above ſaid to have been, with reaſons againſt Mr. Mylne's deſign, he began an attack on it in a letter to the publiſher of the Daily Gazetteer, inſerted in that paper for the firſt day of December 1759, and continued it in the ſucceeding papers of the eighth and fifteenth of the ſame month. To one or more of theſe letters, anſwers were publiſhed, in which it was contended, that at Florence there is a bridge that croſſes the river Arno, of an elliptical form, but the argument drawn from thence, Johnſon had refuted in his firſt letter, by obſerving, that the ſtability thereof is ſo much doubted, that carts are not permitted to paſs over it, and that it has ſtood two hundred years without imitation. Theſe, and many other arguments, as alſo the opinion of that excellent mathematician Mr. Thomas Simpſon, were not of ſufficient weight with the committee for building the bridge, to recommend the ſemicircular arch, Mr. Mylne's deſign was preferred, and the arches are elliptical.

I have already remarked, that Johnſon was unſkilled in the ſcience of architecture, and I might have added, that he was a ſtranger to the very rudiments of it. He could not elſe have failed to notice, in the edifice here ſpoken of, one of the moſt egregious errors that ever diſgraced a ſtructure of its kind; columns diſproportionate in the ratio between their

their heights and their diameters. The proportion of a column is taken from that of the human figure, which, at a medium, is in a man ſeſquioctave of the head, and in a woman ſeſquinonal. The computation of columns by modules or diameters, comes to much the ſame, and according to Palladio, gives, to one of the Doric order, the maſculine proportion of eight of thoſe meaſures, and, to one of the Ionic, the feminine of nine.

Proportions, thus adjuſted by nature, admit of no deviation; whenever that is attempted, deformity enſues, as is to be ſeen in the inſtance before us, where we behold a range of Ionic columns, level, it is true, at their baſes, but riſing from their due proportion at the extremities, in gradation, like the pipes in the front of an organ, to the central arch, where, inſtead of the proportion of a column, they aſſume that of a candle*.

It will perhaps be ſaid, that the great elevation of the centre-arch required this prepoſterous elongation of the columns. To this it may be anſwered, that proportion is not to be wreſted to bye-purpoſes, and that where beautiful forms cannot be introduced, they muſt be given up, and ornament yield place to convenience. It is ſaid, that the idea of columns ſtanding on the piers of a bridge was ſuggeſted by a deſign of Piraneſi, extant among his works, but

* Columns thus diſproportionate, but in a leſs degree, are alſo to be ſeen in the portico of the admiralty-office, deſigned by Ripley, who, from a carpenter that kept a ſhop, and alſo a coffee-houſe, in Wood ſtreet, Cheapſide, by marrying a ſervant of a miniſter obtained a ſeat at the Board of Works.

without an aſſertion that he aſſumed the licence here reprobated. Should he in any inſtance be found to have done ſo, the example of a genius, ſo wildly magnificent as his, will weigh but little againſt the practice of Palladio, Scamozzi, Vignola, and, let me add, the earl of Pembroke, the architect of Weſtminſter bridge, who, in all ſuch emergencies as that inſiſted on, evaded the neceſſity of violating the rules of their art, by rejecting incongruous decorations, and truſted to the applauſe they ſhould acquire by uniting levity and convenience with ſtability.

There are, it muſt be acknowledged, perſons who are as blind to ſymmetry and the beauty of forms, as others are deaf to the harmony of according ſounds, who deny that there are any criteria by which we can diſcriminate beauty from deformity in one ſubject, and conſonance from diſſonance in the other, and who aſſert that taſte is capricious and has no ſtandard, and that fancy is its own arbiter. Let ſuch enjoy their ignorance, while we are engaged in an inveſtigation of the principles into which the pleaſures of the eye and ear are reſolvable. The reſult of ſuch an enquiry will be a thorough conviction, that all of what we underſtand by the terms ſymmetry and harmony has its foundation in mathematical ratios and proportions, that exiſt in all the modifications of matter, and are but emanations of that power, which has ordered all things in number, weight and meaſure*.

* Of theſe the principal are the equal 1 to 1, the ſeſquialteral 2 to 3, the ſeſquitertian 3 to 4, and the duple 1 to 2, anſwering to the uniſon, the diapente, the diateſſaron, and the diapaſon, the ſweeteſt concords in muſic.

I forbear

I forbear to remark the leſſer errors in the con-uction of this edifice, ſuch as the unwarrantable utilation of the key-ſtones over the arches, and e injudicious poſition of the entablature of the luſtrade: thoſe I have pointed out may ſerve to ew, that the great encouragements given of late to e arts of deſign, have hitherto failed to call forth genius in any degree comparable to thoſe of former es, Jones and Sir Chriſtopher Wren; and that the izens of London, in the meridian of its glory ving, with a view to eternize the memory of a vourite miniſter, erected an edifice, in which beauty d ſymmetry are in vain ſought for, and called it by s name *, have thereby perpetuated their own diſ-ace, and ſubjected a whole nation to the reproach of reigners.

Neither the writing of his Raſſelas, nor the event his mother's death, nor the bridge-controverſy, pped the hand of Johnſon, nor interrupted the blication of the Idler; but the ſale of the Univerſal hronicle, the vehicle that contained it, was in ſome gree obſtructed by the practices of thoſe literary predators, who ſubſiſt by the labours of others, and oſe conduct, with reſpect to the Idler, the following per, evidently drawn up by Johnſon, will explain.

'London, January 5, 1759. Advertiſement. The proprietors of the paper, entitled 'The Idler,' hav-ng found that thoſe eſſays are inſerted in the news-papers and magazines with ſo little regard to juſtice r decency, that the Univerſal Chronicle, in which hey firſt appear, is not always mentioned, think it

* It is called Pitt's bridge, and the buildings adjacent to it atham place.

'neceſſary

'neceſſary to declare to the publiſhers of thoſe col-
'lections, that however patiently they have hitherto
'endured theſe injuries, made yet more injurious by
'contempt, they have now determined to endure
'them no longer. They have already ſeen eſſays,
'for which a very large price is paid, transferred,
'with the moſt ſhameleſs rapacity, into the weekly
'or monthly compilations, and their right, at leaſt
'for the preſent, alienated from them, before they
'could themſelves be ſaid to enjoy it. But they
'would not willingly be thought to want tenderneſs,
'even for men by whom no tenderneſs hath been
'ſhewn. The paſt is without remedy, and ſhall be
'without reſentment. But thoſe who have been
'thus buſy with their ſickles in the fields of their
'neighbours, are henceforward to take notice, that
'the time of impunity is at an end. Whoever ſhall,
'without our leave, lay the hand of rapine upon our
'papers, is to expect that we ſhall vindicate our due,
'by the means which juſtice preſcribes, and which are
'warranted by the immemorial preſcriptions of ho-
'nourable trade. We ſhall lay hold, in our turn, on
'their copies, degrade them from the pomp of wide
'margin and diffuſe typography, contract them into
'a narrow ſpace, and ſell them at an humble price;
'yet not with a view of growing rich by confiſcations,
'for we think not much better of money got by pu-
'niſhment than by crimes; we ſhall, therefore, when
'our loſſes are repaid, give what profit ſhall remain
'to the *Magdalens*; for we know not who can be
'more properly taxed for the ſupport of penitent
'proſtitutes, than proſtitutes in whom there yet ap-
'pears neither penitence nor ſhame.'

He

He continued this paper to the extent of one hundred and three numbers, and on Saturday the fifth day of April 1760, cloſed it with an eſſay, containing a ſolemn and very affecting contemplation on the words *this is the laſt*, in various ſignifications. The concluding paragraph ſeems to have been written under the preſſure of that melancholy, which, almoſt inceſſantly afflicted him, heightened, perhaps, by the approach of a ſeaſon of the year, to Chriſtians the moſt ſolemn. The reflections, contained in it, are very ſerious, and ſo elegantly expreſſed, that in the hope that the peruſal of it will not prove contagious to the reader, I here give it at length.

'As the laſt Idler is publiſhed in that ſolemn week 'which the Chriſtian world has always ſet apart for 'the examination of the conſcience, the review of 'life, the extinction of earthly deſires, and the reno-'vation of holy purpoſes, I hope that my readers are 'already diſpoſed to view every incident with ſeriouſ-'neſs, and improve it by meditation; and that when 'they ſee this ſeries of trifles brought to a concluſion, 'they will conſider that, by outliving the Idler, 'they have paſſed weeks, months, and years, which 'are now no longer in their power; that an end muſt 'in time be put to every thing great as to every thing 'little; that to life muſt come its laſt hour, and to 'this ſyſtem of being, its laſt day; the hour at which 'probation ceaſes, and repentance will be vain, the 'day in which every work of the hand, and imagina-'tion of the heart, ſhall be brought to judgment, 'and an everlaſting futurity ſhall be determined 'by the paſt.'

The

The Idler, taken as the title of a ſeries of moral and œconomical eſſays, is a deſignation that imports little; or, rather, its moſt obvious meaning is a bad one. Johnſon was at a loſs for a fitter, but he could hit on no one that had not been pre-occupied. He chose an irony, and meant that his readers ſhould underſtand by it juſt the reverſe of what it ſignified; and, in this his intention, he was in little danger of being miſtaken, or being charged with idleneſs by any of thoſe whom he was labouring, by all the powers of reaſon and eloquence, to make wiſer and better.

The plan and conduct of the Idler reſembles ſo nearly that of the Rambler and the Adventurer, that what has been ſaid of each of thoſe publications, might ſerve for a character of this, ſaving, that in this latter, admiſſion is given to a greater number of papers, calculated to entertain the mind with pleaſing fictions, humorous characters, and varied repreſentations of familiar life, than is to be found in either of the two former, the general effect whereof is, delight, too ſoon interrupted by their ſhortneſs. The ſecond number of the Idler contains an invitation to correſpondents, and it had the aſſiſtance of other hands; but I know but of three papers that can with certainty be ſaid to have been written by any other than Johnſon himſelf; one of the three is No. 67, by Mr. Langton; the other two, No. 76 and 79, are on the ſubject of painting, and, in an evening-hour when his pencil was at reſt, were compoſed by Sir Joſhua Reynolds. And here let me take notice, that in the publication of the Idler, at leaſt when it was collected into volumes, Johnſon and Newbery

Newbery were joint-adventurers, and that they divided equally the profits ariſing from the ſale thereof.

Of theſe eſſays, as alſo the Rambler, and thoſe in the Adventurer which Johnſon wrote, little remains to be remarked, except that, notwithſtanding the depth of thinking which they diſplay, and the nervous and elegant ſtyle in which they are penned, they were extemporaneous compoſitions, and hardly ever underwent a reviſion * before they were ſent to the preſs. The original manuſcripts of the Rambler have paſſed through my hands, and by the peruſal of them I am warranted to ſay, as was ſaid of Shakeſpeare by the players of his time, that he never blotted out a line; and I believe without the riſque of that retort which Ben Jonſon made to them, 'Would he had blotted 'out a thouſand.'

Another circumſtance, worthy of notice, is, that in the portraits of ſingular characters, that occur in the papers written by Johnſon, the painting is ſo ſtrong and lively, that ſome perſons, then living, looking on them as reſemblances of themſelves, actually

* Of his facility in compoſition, and the rapidity with which he wrote for the preſs, here follow a few inſtances: Savage's life, containing a hundred and eighty octavo pages, was the work of thirty-ſix hours. He was wont to furniſh for the Gentleman's Magazine three columns of the debates in an hour, written, as myſelf can atteſt, in a character that almoſt any one might read. His preface to 'The Preceptor,' and his 'Viſion of Theodore,' were each the work of one ſitting, as was alſo the firſt ſeventy lines of his tranſlation of the tenth ſatire of Juvenal, entitled, 'The vanity of human 'Wiſhes;' and what is almoſt incredible, he never red his Raſſelas but in the proofs which came to him from the preſs for correction.

charged

charged him with an intention to render them ridiculous, and were hardly appeaſed by his aſſurances that he copied no particular ſubject, but drew from archetypes which his obſervation had furniſhed, and his imagination had improved.

Johnſon was now become ſo well known, and had by the Rambler, and other of his writings, given ſuch evidences, not only of great abilities, and of his ſkill in human life and manners, but of a ſociable and benevolent diſpoſition, that many became deſirous of his acquaintance, and to this they were farther tempted by the character he had acquired of delighting in converſation, and being free and communicative in his diſcourſe. He had removed, about the beginning of the year 1760, to chambers two doors down the Inner-Temple lane; and I have been told by his neighbour at the corner, that during the time he dwelt there, more enquiries were made at his ſhop for Mr. Johnſon, than for all the inhabitants put together of both the Inner and Middle Temple. This circumſtance in his life leads me to mention, that Richardſon poſſeſſed, but in a leſs degree, the like powers of attraction, but they operated chiefly on young females, who, being deſirous of inſtruction in the duties of life, were permitted by their parents and friends to viſit and receive from him ſuch leſſons of prudence as he was ever ready and well qualified to give them; and it is well known, that many ingenious young women, who reſorted to his houſe as to an academy for tuition, became ſo improved by his converſation and his extemporary commentaries on his own writings, as afterwards to make a conſiderable figure in

in the literary world *. And here let me obſerve, that the benefits of oral inſtruction, joined with the peruſal of ſuch authors as we now put into female hands, may be eſtimated by the degree of mental improvement at which the ſex is at this day arrived, which, as Johnſon once remarked to me on receiving a lady's letter, is ſo great, that in that kind of compoſition, we who were their teachers, may learn of them.

From this propenſity to diſcurſive communication, in which Johnſon and Richardſon reſembled each other, nothing more is to be underſtood, than that both took pleaſure in that interchange of ſentiments and opinions, which renders converſation inſtructive and delightful, for, in other reſpects, they were men of very different endowments and tempers. Richardſon being bred to a mechanic occupation, had no learning, nor more reading than was ſufficient to enable him to form a ſtyle eaſy and intelligible, and a little raiſed above that of vulgar narrative. His ſentiments were his own, and of this he was ſo ſenſible, and alſo of the originality and importance of many of them, that he would ever be talking of his writings, and the words ſentiment and ſentimentality became, not only a part of the cant of his ſchool, but were adopted by ſucceeding writers, and have been uſed to recommend to ſome readers ſentimental journies, ſentimental letters, ſentimental ſermons, and a world of traſh,

* See a poem in Fawkes and Woty's 'Poetical calendar,' intitled 'The Feminead,' written by the Rev. Mr. Duncombe, late of Canterbury, deceaſed.

which,

which, but for this ſilly epithet, would never have attracted notice.

Richardſon's converſation was of the preceptive kind, but it wanted the diverſity of Johnſon's, and had no intermixture of wit or humour. Richardſon could never relate a pleaſant ſtory, and hardly reliſh one told by another: he was ever thinking of his own writings, and liſtening to the praiſes which, with assiduous profuſion, his friends were inceſſantly beſtowing on them, he would ſcarce enter into free converſation with any one that he thought had not red 'Clariſſa,' or 'Sir Charles Grandiſon,' and at beſt, he could not be ſaid to be a companionable man *.

Thoſe who were unacquainted with Richardſon, and had red his books, were led to believe, that they exhibited a picture of his own mind, and that his temper and domeſtic behaviour could not but correſpond with that refined morality which they inculcate, but in this they were deceived. He was auſtere in the government of his family, and iſſued his orders to ſome of his ſervants in writing only. His neareſt female relations, in the preſence of ſtrangers, were mutes, and

* I once travelled with him in the Fulham ſtage-coach, in which, at my getting in, I found him ſeated. I learned, by ſomewhat he ſaid to the coachman, who he was, and made ſome eſſays towards converſation, but he ſeemed diſinclined to any. There was one other paſſenger, who being a female, I was, in common civility, bound to take notice of; but my male companion I left to indulge himſelf in a reverie, which neither he nor I interrupted by the utterance of a ſingle word, and laſted till he was ſet down at his houſe on Parſon's green. He had the courtely to aſk us in, but as our acquaintance had but lately commenced, and had received but little improvement in our journey, the civility was declined.

ſeemed

ſeemed to me, in a viſit I once made him, to have been diſciplined in the ſchool of Ben Jonſon's Moroſe, whoſe injunction to his ſervant was, 'Anſwer 'me not but with your leg.' In ſhort, they appeared to have been taught to converſe with him by ſigns; and it was too plain to me, that, on his part, the moſt frequent of them were frowns and geſticulations, importing that they ſhould leave his preſence. I have heard it ſaid, that he was what is called a nervous man; and how far nervoſity, with ſo good an underſtanding as he is allowed to have poſſeſſed, will excuſe a conduct ſo oppoſite to that philanthropy which he laboured to inculcate, I cannot ſay: his benevolence might have taken another direction, and in other inſtances be very ſtrong; for I was once a witneſs to his putting into the hand of Mr. Whiſton the bookſeller, ten guineas for the relief of one whom a ſudden accident had made a widow.

Johnſon's mind was never occupied on trifles: his ſpeculations were grand and noble, his reading various and extenſive, and, on ſome ſubjects, profound. As he profeſſed always to ſpeak in the beſt and moſt correct phraſe, rejecting all ſuch common and vulgar combinations of ſpeech as are in uſe only till others equally affected and inſignificant are invented, his converſation-ſtyle bore a great reſemblance to that of his writings, ſo that, in his common diſcourſe, he might ſeem to incur the cenſure which biſhop Burnet caſts on the lord chancellor Nottingham, of being too eloquent; but ſo far were his hearers from thinking ſo, that many wiſhed for the power of retaining as well the colloquial form as the ſubſtance of his converſa-

tions; and ſome there were, who to that end, in imitation of the Colloquia Menſalia of Luther, and the Table-talk of Selden, not to ſay of the books in *ana**, as they are called, made common-places of his ſayings, his precepts, and his apophthegms; but the want of judgment in the ſelection of them, has rendered moſt of the collections of this kind, that I have ever ſeen, of little worth.

Geſticular mimicry and buffoonery he hated, and would often huff Garrick for exerciſing it in his preſence; but of the talent of humour he had an almoſt enviable portion. To deſcribe the nature of this faculty, as he was wont to diſplay it in his hours of mirth and relaxation, I muſt ſay, that it was ever of that arch and dry kind, which lies concealed under the appearance of gravity, and which acquieſces in an error for the purpoſe of refuting it. Thus, in the Rambler, No. 1, he tells his readers, very gravely, that it is one among many reaſons for which he purpoſes to entertain his countrymen, that he hopes not much to tire thoſe whom he ſhall not happen to pleaſe, and if he is not commended for the beauty of his works, to be at leaſt pardoned for their brevity. 'But whether,' adds he, 'my expectations are moſt 'fixed on pardon or praiſe, I think it not neceſſary to 'diſcover.'—And in the Idler, No. 3, he ſuggeſts conſolation againſt the dread of an imaginary evil founded on falſe philoſophy, by admitting, that

* Theſe are the Menagiana, Parrhaſiana, Huetiana, Scaligeriana, Naudæana, Patiniana, Poggiana, Thuana, Perroniana, Pithœana, Colomeſiana, Sarraziana, Valeſiana, and others leſs known.

though

though certain, it is remote. The paſſage would be injured by contraction, and I therefore give it at length.

'Many philoſophers imagine, that the elements 'themſelves may in time be exhauſted; that the ſun, 'by ſhining long, will effuſe all its light; and that 'by the continual waſte of aqueous particles, the 'whole earth will at laſt become a ſandy deſart.

'I would not adviſe my readers to diſturb themſelves by contriving how they ſhall live without 'light and water; for the days of univerſal thirſt and 'perpetual darkneſs are at a great diſtance. The 'ocean and the ſun will laſt our time, and we may 'leave poſterity to ſhift for themſelves.

'But if the ſtores of nature are limited, much more 'narrow bounds muſt be ſet to the modes of life; 'and mankind may want a moral or amuſing paper 'many years before they ſhall be deprived of drink 'or day-light. This want, which to the buſy and 'inventive may ſeem eaſily remediable by ſome ſubſtitute or other, the whole race of idlers will feel with 'all the ſenſibility that all ſuch torpid animals can 'ſuffer.'

A friend of his uſed often to viſit him, who, though a man of learning and great good ſenſe, had a ſtyle of converſing ſo peculiarly eloquent and verboſe, as to be ſometimes unintelligible: Johnſon had a mind one day to give me a ſpecimen of it, and aſſuming his manner, he, in a connected ſpeech on a familiar ſubject, uttered a ſucceſſion of ſentences, in language reſembling the ſtyle of metaphyſics, but, though fluent, ſo obſcured by parentheſes and other involu-

tions, that I was unable to collect from it a ſingle idea. After he had for five minutes continued this gibberiſh, he ſaid, 'This is the manner in which '* * * * entertains me whenever he comes here.'

In the ſame vein of humour he once ridiculed Hervey's Meditations on a Flower-garden and other ſubjects, in the following extemporaneous reflections on a pudding:

'Let us ſeriouſly reflect on what a pudding 'is compoſed of. It is compoſed of flour that 'once waved in the golden grain, and drank the 'dews of the morning—of milk preſſed from the 'ſwelling udder by the gentle hand of the beau-'teous milk-maid, whoſe beauty and innocence 'might have recommended a worſe draught; who, 'whilſt ſhe ſtroked the udder, indulged no ambitious 'thoughts of dwelling in palaces, and formed no 'ſchemes for the deſtruction of her fellow-crea-'tures—milk which is drawn from the cow, that 'uſeful animal, that eats the graſs of the field, and 'ſupplies us with that which made the greateſt part 'of the food of that age, which the poets have agreed 'to call golden.

'It is made with an egg, that miracle of nature, 'which the theoretical Burnet has compared to crea-'tion—an egg that contains water within its beau-'tiful ſmooth ſurface, and an unformed maſs which, 'by the incubation of the parent, becomes a regular 'animal, furniſhed with bones and ſinews, and co-'vered with feathers.

'Let us conſider—can there be any thing wanting 'to complete this meditation on a pudding—if more

'is

'is wanting, more may be found. It contains ſalt, 'which preſerves the ſea from putrefaction; ſalt, 'which is made the image of intellectual excellence, 'contributes to the formation of a pudding.'

He excelled alſo in the talent of burleſque verſification, and, upon occaſion of a diſcourſe at Sir Joſhua Reynolds's on Dr. Percy's 'Reliques of ancient Engliſh poetry,' in which the beautiful ſimplicity of many of the ballads therein contained was remarked with ſome exaggeration, Johnſon contended, that what was called ſimplicity was, in truth, inanity; and, to illuſtrate his argument, and ridicule that kind of poetry, uttered the following impromptu:

'As with my hat upon my head,
'I walk'd along the Strand,
'I there did meet another man,
'With his hat in his hand.'

And it being at a tea-converſation, he, addreſſing himſelf to Miſs Reynolds, went on rhyming thus,

'I pray thee, gentle Renny dear,
'That thou wilt give to me,
'With cream and ſugar temper'd well,
'Another diſh of tea.

'Nor fear that I, my gentle maid,
'Shall long detain the cup,
'When once unto the bottom I
'Have drank the liquor up.

'Yet hear, at laſt, this mournful truth,
'Nor hear it with a frown,
'Thou can'ſt not make the tea ſo faſt,
'As I can gulp it down.'

With theſe powers of inſtructing and delighting thoſe with whom he converſed, it is no wonder that the acquaintance of Johnſon was ſought by many; and I will not ſay, either that he ſet ſo great a value on his time, as not to be acceſſible to all who wiſhed for the pleaſure of it, or that his vanity was not gratified by the viſits of biſhops, of courtiers, ſenators, ſcholars, travellers, and women.

In his converſation with the laſt in this enumeration, he had ſuch a felicity as would put vulgar gallantry out of countenance. Of the female mind, he conceived a higher opinion than many men, and though he was never ſuſpected of a blameable intimacy with any individual of them, had a great eſteem for the ſex. The defect in his powers of ſight rendered him totally inſenſible to the charms of beauty; but he knew that beauty was the attribute of the ſex, and treated all women with ſuch an equable complacency, as flattered every one into a belief, that ſhe had her ſhare of that or ſome more valuable endowment. In his diſcourſes with them, his compliments had ever a neat and elegant turn: they were never direct, but always implied the merit they were intended to atteſt.

In this enjoyment of himſelf and his friends, his engagements to the public were forgotten: his critical talents lay dormant, and not any, nor all of thoſe who

who wiſhed to ſee his Shakeſpeare, could rouſe his attention to the proſecution of that work; yet was he ready, at the call of almoſt any one, to aſſiſt, either by correction, or by a preface, or dedication, in the publication of works not his own. Dr. Madden, ſo well-known by his premiums for the encouragement of Proteſtant working-ſchools in Ireland, and other inſtances of beneficence in favour of that country, in the year 1745 publiſhed a panegyrical poem on archbiſhop Boulter; ſome years after, being minded to re-publiſh it, he ſubmitted it to Johnſon's correction, and I found among his books a copy of the poem, with a note, in a ſpare leaf thereof, purporting, that the author had made him a viſit, and, for a very few remarks and alterations of it, had preſented him with ten guineas. Such caſual emoluments as theſe Johnſon frequently derived from his profeſſion of an author. For the dedication to his preſent majeſty, of Adams's book on the uſe of the globes, he was, as himſelf informed me, gratified with a preſent of a very curious meteorological inſtrument, of a new and ingenious conſtruction.

About this time, as it is ſuppoſed, he, for ſundry beneficed clergymen that requeſted him, compoſed pulpit diſcourſes *, and for theſe, he made no ſcruple of confeſſing, he was paid: his price, I am informed, was a moderate one, a guinea; and ſuch was his notion

* The practice of preaching ſermons compoſed by others is now become ſo common, that many of the clergy ſcruple not to avow it, and think themſelves juſtified by the authority of Mr. Addiſon, who in one of his Spectators has very incautiouſly given countenance thereto, and put into the mouths not only of ſuch clergymen *as are minus idonei*, but of ſuch as, contrary to their

tion of justice, that having been paid, he considered them so absolutely the property of the purchaser, as to renounce all claim to them. He reckoned that he had written about forty sermons; but, except as to some, knew not in what hands they were—'I 'have,' said he, 'been paid for them, and have no 'right to enquire about them*.'

I have now brought him to the year 1760, the fifty-first of his age. He had nothing to depend on for subsistence but the labour of his brain; and that apprehension, touching the duration of his rational powers, which throughout his life haunted him, increased the terrors of approaching age. The accession of our present gracious sovereign to the throne, and the bounty exercised by him towards Johnson, dispelled this gloomy prospect, and placed him in such a state of affluence as

engagement at their ordination, instead of being *diligent in*, are negligent of, *such studies as help to the knowledge of the scriptures*, a perpetual apology for ignorance and idleness; for, as long as they chuse to say there are better discourses extant, or to be procured, than they are able to make, the excuse will hold them; and accordingly many are not ashamed to claim the benefit of it, who have nothing to plead but what is an aggravation of their neglect; to which it may be added, that as it is an assumption of the merit of another, the practice is unjust, and, as its leads to a belief of that which is not true, in a high degree immoral.

* Myself have heard, in the church of St. Margaret Westminster, sundry sermons, which I and many others judged, by the sentiments, style, and method, to be of his composition; one in particular, Johnson being present. The next visit I made him, I told him that I had seen him at St. Margaret's on the preceding Sunday, and that it was he who then preached. He heard me, and did not deny either assertion, which, if either had not been true, he certainly would have done. In his diary I find the following note: '77, Sept. 21. Concio pro Taylore.'

Vis

his utmoſt induſtry would hardly ever have enabled him to arrive at. Lord Bute was the miniſter at the time; and the perſon employed to notify to Johnſon his majeſty's intention to reward him for his literary labours with a penſion of 300l. a year, was his friend Mr. Murphy. Upon receiving the news, Johnſon was indoubt what anſwer to return, being, perhaps, diſturbed with the reflection, that whatever he might deſerve from the public, he had very little claim to the favour of any of the deſcendants of the houſe of Hanover; and deſired that Mr. Murphy would give him till next day to deliberate upon a meſſage ſo unexpected. At the end thereof he ſignified his willingneſs to accept it.

It was by Johnſon and his friends thought fit, that he ſhould return thanks for this diſtinguiſhing mark of the royal favour, and that lord Bute, who may be ſuppoſed to have been inſtrumental in procuring it, was the proper perſon to convey them. Accordingly, he waited on his lordſhip for the purpoſe, and, being admitted to him, teſtified his ſenſe of the obligation; but having done this, he thought he had done enough, and never after could be prevailed on to knock at his door.

He had now ſuffered himſelf to be enrolled in the liſt of penſioners, and was become obnoxious to the cenſures of thoſe, who, looking upon a perpetual enmity to government and its miniſters as a proof of public virtue, endeavoured to have it believed, that all favours diſpenſed by the crown, even when meant as the rewards of merit, or the encouragement of learning, of ingenuity, or induſtry, were but the wages

healing that ever ſought a livelihood by it: him he conſulted in all that related to his health, and made ſo neceſſary to him as hardly to be able to live without him.

The name of this perſon was Robert Levett. An account of him is given in the Gentleman's Magazine for February 1785: an earlier than that, I have now lying before me, in a letter from a perſon in the country to Johnſon, written in anſwer to one in which he had deſired to be informed of ſome particulars reſpecting his friend Levett, then lately deceaſed. The ſubſtance of this information is as follows:

He was born at Kirk Ella, a pariſh about five miles diſtant from Hull, and lived with his parents till about twenty years of age. He had acquired ſome knowledge of the Latin language, and had a propenſity to learning, which his parents not being able to gratify, he went to live as a ſhopman with a woollen-draper at Hull: with him he ſtayed two years, during which time he learned from a neighbour of his maſter ſomewhat of the practice of phyſic: at the end thereof he came to London, with a view poſſibly to improve himſelf in that profeſſion; but by ſome ſtrange accident was led to purſue another courſe, and became ſteward or ſome other upper ſervant to the then lord Cardigan, [or Cadogan] and having ſaved ſome money, he took a reſolution to travel, and viſited France and Italy for the purpoſe, as his letters mention, of gaining experience in phyſic, and, returning to London with a valuable library which he had collected abroad, placed one of his brothers apprentice to a mathematical-inſtrument maker, and provided for the education of another. After this he went to Paris, and

and, for improvement, attended the hoſpitals in that city. At the end of five years he returned to England, and taking lodgings in the houſe of an attorney in Northumberland court, near Charing croſs, he became a practicer of phyſic. The letter adds, that he was about ſeventy-eight at the time of his death.

The account of Levett in the Gentleman's Magazine is anonymous; I nevertheleſs inſert it verbatim, together with a letter of Johnſon's to Dr. Lawrence notifying his death.

'Mr. Levett, though an Engliſhman by birth, became early in life a waiter at a coffee-houſe in Paris. The ſurgeons who frequented it, finding him of an inquiſitive turn, and attentive to their converſation, made a purſe for him, and gave him ſome inſtructions in their art. They afterwards furniſhed him with the means of other knowledge, by procuring him free admiſſion to ſuch lectures in pharmacy and anatomy as were read by the ableſt profeſſors of that period. Hence his introduction to a buſineſs, which afforded him a continual, though ſlender maintenance. Where the middle part of his life was ſpent, is uncertain. He reſided, however, above twenty years under the roof of Johnſon, who never wiſhed him to be regarded as an inferior, or treated him like a dependent*. He breakfaſted with the doctor every morning, and perhaps was ſeen no more by him till mid-night. Much of the day was employed in attendance on his patients, who were

* Dr. Johnſon has frequently obſerved, that Levett was indebted to him for nothing more than houſe-room, his ſhare in a penny loaf at breakfaſt, and now and then a dinner on a Sunday.

'chiefly

'chiefly of the loweſt rank of tradeſmen. The re-
'mainder of his hours he dedicated to Hunter's
'lectures, and to as many different opportunities of
'improvement as he could meet with on the ſame
'gratuitous conditions. "All his medical know-
"ledge," ſaid Johnſon, "and it is not inconſiderable*,
"was obtained through the ear. Though he buys
"books, he ſeldom looks into them, or diſcovers any
"power by which he can be ſuppoſed to judge of an
"author's merit."

'Before he became a conſtant inmate of the doctor's
'houſe, he married, when he was near ſixty, a woman
'of the town, who had perſuaded him (notwithſtand-
'ing their place of congreſs was a ſmall-coal ſhed in
'Fetter lane) that ſhe was nearly related to a man of
'fortune, but was injuriouſly kept by him out of
'large poſſeſſions. It is almoſt needleſs to add, that
'both parties were diſappointed in their views. If
'Levett took her for an heireſs, who in time might
'be rich, ſhe regarded him as a phyſician already in
'conſiderable practice.—Compared with the marvels
'of this tranſaction, as Johnſon himſelf declared
'when relating them, the tales in the Arabian
'Nights' Entertainments ſeem familiar occurrences.
'Never was infant more completely duped than our
'hero. He had not been married four months, be-
'fore a writ was taken out againſt him, for debts in-
'curred by his wife.——He was ſecreted, and his
'friend then procured him a protection from a foreign
'miniſter. In a ſhort time afterwards, ſhe ran away

* He had acted for many years in the capacity of ſurgeon and apothecary to Johnſon, under the direction of Dr. Lawrence.

'from

'from him, and was tried, providentially, in his opi-
'nion, for picking pockets at the Old Bailey. Her
'husband was, with difficulty, prevented from attend-
'ing the court, in the hope she would be hanged. She
'pleaded her own cause, and was acquitted; a separa-
'tion between this ill-starred couple took place; and
'Dr. Johnson then took Levett home, where he con-
'tinued till his death, which happened suddenly, with-
'out pain, Jan. 17, 1782. His vanity in supposing,
'that a young woman of family and fortune should be
'enamoured of him, Dr. Johnson thought, deserved
'some check.—As no relations of his were known to
'Dr. Johnson, he advertised for them. In the course
'of a few weeks an heir at law appeared, and ascer-
'tained his title to what effects the deceased had left
'behind him.

'Levett's character was rendered valuable by re-
'peated proof of honesty, tenderness, and gratitude to
'his benefactor, as well as by an unwearied diligence
'in his profession.—His single failing was, an occasi-
'onal departure from sobriety. Johnson would ob-
'serve, he was, perhaps, the only man who ever be-
'came intoxicated through motives of prudence.
'He reflected, that if he refused the gin or brandy
'offered him by some of his patients, he could have
'been no gainer by their cure, as they might have
'had nothing else to bestow on him. This habit of
'taking a fee, in whatever shape it was exhibited,
'could not be put off by advice or admonition of
'any kind. He would swallow what he did not
'like, nay, what he knew would injure him, rather
'than go home with an idea, that his skill had
'been exerted without recompence. "Had (said

"Johnson)

" Johnſon) all his patients malicioufly combined " to reward him with meat and ſtrong liquors inſtead " of money, he would either have burſt, like the " dragon in the Apocrypha, through repletion, or " been ſcorched up, like Portia, by ſwallowing fire."

' But let not from hence an imputation of rapacioufneſs ' be fixed upon him. Though he took all that was ' offered him, he demanded nothing from the poor, ' nor was known in any inſtance to have enforced the ' payment of even what was juſtly his due.

' His perſon was middle-ſized and thin; his viſage ' ſwarthy, aduſt and corrugated. His converſation, ' except on profeſſional ſubjects, barren. When in ' deſhabille, he might have been miſtaken for an ' alchemiſt, whoſe complexion had been hurt by the ' fumes of the crucible, and whoſe clothes had ſuffer- ' ed from the ſparks of the furnace.

' Such was Levett, whoſe whimſical frailty, if ' weighed againſt his good and uſeful qualities, ' was

" A floating atom, duſt that falls unheeded
" Into the adverſe ſcale, nor ſhakes the balance."

IRENE.

To this character I here add as a ſupplement to it, a dictum of Johnſon reſpecting Levett, viz. that his external appearance and behaviour were ſuch, that he diſguſted the rich, and terrified the poor.

But notwithſtanding all theſe offenſive particulars, Johnſon, whoſe credulity in ſome inſtances was as great as his incredulity in others, conceived of him as of a ſkilful medical profeſſor, and thought himſelf happy

happy in having ſo near his perſon one who was to him, not ſolely a phyſician, a ſurgeon, or an apothecary, but all. In extraordinary caſes he, however, availed himſelf of the aſſiſtance of his valued friend Dr. Lawrence, a man of whom, in reſpect of his piety, learning, and ſkill in his profeſſion, it may almoſt be ſaid, the world was not worthy, inaſmuch as it ſuffered his talents, for the whole of his life, to remain, in a great meaſure, unemployed, and himſelf to end his days in ſorrow and obſcurity.

Of this perſon, with whom I was for many years acquainted, but who is now no more, gratitude for the benefits which myſelf and one moſt dear to me have derived from his ſkill and attention, obliges me to ſpeak with reverence and reſpect. He was a native of Hampſhire, and having ended his ſtudies at Oxford, came to London about the year 1737, at which time Dr. Frank Nicholls had attained great reputation for ſkill in anatomy. To complete them, he became a pupil of his, in that branch of medical ſcience, and upon Nicholls's diſcontinuing to read lectures therein, which he had for ſeveral years done with great applauſe, Dr. Lawrence took them up, and had many hearers, till Hunter, a ſurgeon, arrived from Scotland, who, ſettling in London, became his rival in the ſame practice, and having the advantage of Dr. Lawrence, in his manner of enunciating, together with the aſſiſtance and ſupport of all his countrymen in this kingdom, and moreover, being a man whoſe ſkill in his art was equal to his pretenſions, he became a favourite with the leading men in the practice of phyſic, and in a few winters drew to him ſuch a reſort of pupils, as in-

duced Dr. Lawrence to give up lecturi and betake himſelf to the general exerciſe of his profeſſion.

In his endeavours to attain to eminence, it was his misfortune to fail: he was above thoſe arts by which popularity is acquired, and had beſides ſome perſonal defects and habits which ſtood in his way; a vacuity of countenance very unfavourable to an opinion of his learning or ſagacity, and certain convulſive motions of the head and features that gave pain to the beholders, and drew off attention to all that he ſaid *.

He delighted much in naval architecture, and was able with his own hands, and a variety of tools of his own contrivance, to form a model of a ſhip of war of any rate; firſt framing it with ribs and ſuch other timbers as are requiſite in a ſhip for ſervice, and afterwards covering it with planks of the thickneſs of a half-crown piece, and the breadth of about an inch, which he faſtened to the ribs with wooden pins of a proportionable ſize, and in this manner of working he completed many ſuch models, elegantly wrought and moſt beautiful in their forms. He was alſo a lover of muſic, and was able to play his part in concert on the violoncello † till hindered by deafneſs, a diſorder that

* It will hardly be believed, how much ſuch particularities as theſe, obſtruct the progreſs of one who is to make his way in a profeſſion: a ſtammering, or a bad articulation, ſpoil an orator, and a diſguſting appearance hurts a phyſician. Pemberton, the Greſham profeſſor, a great man in his time, was configned to indigence, by a habit of diſtorting the muſcles of his face, which was become irreſiſtible.

† He had a younger brother named Charles, a ſolicitor of great practice, who alſo played on the violoncello, and, having been a

that came upon him about the middle of his life, and at length drove him to ſeek a retreat from the world and all its cares at Canterbury, where, about the year 1783, he died. To conſole him under ſome family diſappointments, Johnſon addreſſed to him a fine Latin ode, which is inſerted in his works.

He wrote the life of his friend Dr. Nicholls, in very elegant Latin, but it was never publiſhed: his ſole deſign in printing it being to gratify thoſe of his own profeſſion. In the ſame language, he wrote the life of Dr. William Harvey, prefixed to an edition of his works, publiſhed by the college of phyſicians in 1766, in one volume 4to.

The ſincere and laſting friendſhip, that ſubſiſted between Johnſon and Levett, may ſerve to ſhew, that although a ſimilarity of diſpoſitions and qualities has a tendency to beget affection, or ſomething very nearly reſembling it, it may be contracted and ſubſiſt where this inducement is wanting; for hardly were ever two men leſs like each other, in this reſpect, than were they. Levett had not an underſtanding capable of comprehending the talents of Johnſon: the mind of Johnſon was therefore, as to him, a blank; and Johnſon, had the eye of his mind been more penetrating than it

pupil on that inſtrument, of Caporale, was the beſt performer on it of any gentleman in England. About the year 1740, I was uſed to meet both the brothers at a tavern in Gracechurch ſtreet, where was a private concert, to which none but ſuch as could join in it were admitted. Many of thoſe who frequented it were great maſters, namely, Mr. Stanley, who played the firſt violin, the above Sig. Caporale, Vincent, the hautboy player, and Balicourt, who performed on the German flute: the reſt were organiſts and gentlemen performers.

was, could not diſcern, what did not exiſt, any particulars in Levett's character that at all reſembled his own. He had no learning, and conſequently was an unfit companion for a learned man; and though it may be ſaid, that having lived ſome years abroad, he muſt have ſeen and remarked many things that would have afforded entertainment in the relation, this advantage was counterbalanced by an utter inability for continued converſation, taciturnity being one of the moſt obvious features in his character: the conſideration of all which particulars almoſt impels me to ſay, that Levett admired Johnſon becauſe others admired him, and that Johnſon in pity loved Levett, becauſe few others could find any thing in him to love.

And here I cannot forbear remarking, that, almoſt throughout his life, poverty and diſtreſſed circumſtances ſeemed to be the ſtrongeſt of all recommendations to his favour. When aſked by one of his moſt intimate friends, how he could bear to be ſurrounded by ſuch neceſſitous and undeſerving people as he had about him, his anſwer was, 'If I did not aſſiſt them 'no one elſe would, and they muſt be loſt for want.' Among many others, whom he thus patronized, was a worthleſs fellow, a dancing-maſter by profeſſion, and an aſſiſtant in teaching to the famous Noverre the favourite of Mr. Garrick. This man, notwithſtanding the nature of his employment, which was a genteel one, and led to no ſuch connections, delighted in the company and converſation of marſhal's-court attornies, and of bailiffs and their followers, and others of a lower claſs, ſharpers and ſwindlers, who, when they had made

his

him drunk, would get him to ſign notes and engagements of various kinds, which, he not being able to diſcharge, they had him arreſted upon, and this was ſo frequently the caſe, that much of his time was paſſed in confinement. His wife, through Mrs. Williams, got at Johnſon, and told him her tale, which was, that her huſband was, at that inſtant, detained for a ſmall debt in a ſpunging-houſe, and he conceiving it to be a piteous one, and an additional proof that in human life the evil accidents outnumber the good, ſent her to me for advice. I heard her ſtory, and learned from it, that all the merit of the fellow lay in his heels, that he had neither principle nor diſcretion, and, in ſhort, was a cully, the dupe of every one that would make him drunk. I therefore diſmiſſed her with a meſſage to Johnſon to this effect: that her huſband made it impoſſible for his friends to help him, and muſt ſubmit to his deſtiny. When I next ſaw Johnſon, I told him that there ſeemed to be as exact a fitneſs between the character of this man and his aſſociates, as is between the web of a ſpider and the wings of a fly, and I could not but think he was born to be cheated. Johnſon ſeemed to acquieſce in my opinion; but I believe, before that, had ſet him at liberty by paying the debt.

Another of Johnſon's diſtreſſed friends was, Mr. Edmund Southwell, a younger brother of Thomas lord Southwell, of the kingdom of Ireland. This gentleman, having no patrimony, was, in his younger days, a cornet of horſe; but having in a duel, into which he was forced, ſlain his antagoniſt, he quitted the ſervice, and truſted to Providence for a ſupport.

He was a man of wonderful parts, of lively and entertaining converſation, and well acquainted with the world; he was alſo a brother in affliction with Johnſon, that is to ſay, he laboured under a depreſſion of mind, occaſioned by the miſadventure above-mentioned, that often approached to inſanity. Being without employment, his practice was to wander about the ſtreets of London, and call in at ſuch coffee-houſes, for inſtance, the Smyrna and Cocoa-tree in Pall-Mall, and Child's and Batſon's in the city, as were frequented by men of intelligence, or where any thing like converſation was going forward: in theſe he found means to make friends, from whom he derived a precarious ſupport. In the city he was ſo well known, and ſo much beloved and pitied, that many, by private donations, relieved his wants. In particular, Sir Robert Ladbroke, an alderman thereof, and a man of opulence, made him frequent preſents of money to ſupply his neceſſities, and Mr. Bates, the maſter of the Queen's-arms tavern in St. Paul's church-yard, ſuffered him, as often as he pleaſed, to add to an ideal account ſubſiſting between them, the expence of a dinner. A gentleman of great worth in the city, who knew and pitied his diſtreſſes, procured, unknown to him, from a lady famous for her beneficence, a penſion of a hundred pounds a year, which he lived but few years to receive.

Johnſon was a great lover of penitents, and of all ſuch men as, in their converſation, made profeſſions of piety; of this man he would ſay, that he was one of the moſt pious of all his acquaintance, but in this, as he frequently was in the judgment he formed of

others,

others, he was miſtaken. It is poſſible that Southwell might, in his converſation, expreſs ſuch ſentiments of religion and moral obligation, as ſerved to ſhew that he was not an infidel, but he ſeldom went ſober to bed, and as ſeldom roſe from it before noon.

He was alſo an admirer of ſuch as he thought well-bred men. What was his notion of good breeding I could never learn. If it was not courteſy and affability, it could to him be nothing; for he was an incompetent judge of graceful attitudes and motions, and of the ritual of behaviour. Of lord Southwell, the brother of the above perſon, and of Tom Hervey, a profligate, worthleſs man, the author of the letter to Sir Thomas Hanmer, and who had nothing in his external appearance that could in the leaſt recommend him, he was uſed to ſay, they were each of them a model for the firſt man of quality in the kingdom. In this method of eſtimating behaviour, he ſeemed to think that good-breeding is a faculty, which, like fencing, dancing, and other bodily exerciſes, muſt be learned before they can be practiſed; whereas, it is obvious, that this quality is nothing more than artificial benevolence, and that that politeneſs, which it is the employment of the inſtructors of youth to teach, is but a ſubſtitute for thoſe diſpoſitions of mind, which, whoever poſſeſſes, and takes care to cultivate, will have very little need of foreign aſſiſtance in the forming of his manners.

He once mentioned to me a ſaying of Dr. Nicholls, and highly commended it, viz. that it

was a point of wiſdom to form intimacies, and to chooſe for our friends only perſons of known worth and integrity, and that to do ſo had been the rule of his life. It is, therefore, difficult to account for the conduct of Johnſon in the choice of many of his aſſociates, and particularly of thoſe who, when his circumſtances became eaſy, he ſuffered to intrude on him. Of theſe he had ſome at bed and board, who had elbowed through the world, and ſubſiſted by lying, begging, and ſhifting, all which he knew, but ſeemed to think never the worſe of them. In his endeavours to promote the intereſts of people of this claſs, he, in ſome inſtances, went ſuch lengths as were hardly conſiſtent with that integrity, which he manifeſted on all other occaſions; for he would frequently, by letters, recommend thoſe to credit, who could obtain it by no other means, and thereby enabled them to contract debts, which he had good reaſon to ſuſpect, they neither could nor ever would pay.

Theſe connections expoſed him to trouble and inceſſant ſolicitation, which he bore well enough, but his inmates were enemies to his peace, and occaſioned him great diſquiet: the jealouſy that ſubſiſted among them rendered his dwelling irkſome to him, and he ſeldom approached it, after an evening's converſation abroad, but with the dread of finding it a ſcene of diſcord, and of having his ears filled with the complaints of Mrs. Williams of Frank's neglect of his duty and inattention to the intereſts of his maſter, and of Frank againſt Mrs. Williams, for the authority ſhe aſſumed over him, and exerciſed with an unwarrantable ſeverity. Even thoſe intruders who had taken

taken shelter under his roof, and who, in his absence from home, brought thither their children, found cause to murmur; their provision of food was scanty, or their dinners ill dressed; all which he chose to endure rather than put an end to their clamours, by ridding his house of such thankless and troublesome guests. Nay, so insensible was he of the ingratitude of those whom he suffered thus to hang on him, and among whom he may be said to have divided an income which was little more than sufficient for his own support, that he would submit to reproach and personal affront from some of them, even Levett would sometimes insult him, and Mrs. Williams, in her paroxysms of rage, has been known to drive him from her presence.

Who, that reflects on Johnson's pusillanimity in these instances, can reconcile it to that spirit which prompted him, or with those endowments which enabled him to maintain a superiority over all with whom he conversed? or to that seeming ferocity of temper that gave occasion to some to consider him as an animal not to be approached without terror? or account for the inconsistency above-noted, otherwise than by resolving it into those principles that dictated patience, under all the provocations of a female tongue, to Socrates? In truth, there was more asperity in his manner of expression than in his natural disposition; for I have heard that, in many instances, and to some with tears in his eyes, he has apologized to those whom he had offended by contradiction or roughness of behaviour.

To this inconsistency of character it must be imputed, that he failed to attract reverence and respect from

from thoſe who lived in greateſt intimacy with him. There was wanting in his conduct and behaviour that dignity, which reſults from a regular and orderly courſe of action, and, by an irreſiſtible power, commands eſteem. He could not be ſaid to be a ſtayed man, nor ſo to have adjuſted in his mind the balance of reaſon and paſſion, as to give occaſion to ſay what may be obſerved of ſome men, that all they do is juſt, fit, and right: and although he was ſtrict, and even punctilious, in the practice of the great duties of morality, he truſted but little to his domeſtic conduct, to his method of employing his time, and governing his family, for the good opinion he wiſhed the world to entertain of him, but, in theſe particulars, gave way to the love of eaſe, and to ſelf-indulgence, little regarding, in his own practice, thoſe counſels of prudence, thoſe œconomical maxims, and thoſe reflections on the ſhortneſs of human life, with which his writings abound. To a lady, who ſignified a great deſire to increaſe her acquaintance with authors, conceiving that more might be learned from their converſation and manner of living, than from their works—'Madam,' ſaid he, 'the beſt part 'of an author will always be found in his writings.'—And to a perſon, who once ſaid he paid little regard to thoſe writers on religion or morality, whoſe practice correſponded not with their precepts, he imputed a want of knowledge of mankind, ſaying, it was groſs ignorance in him not to know, that good principles and an irregular life were conſiſtent with each other.

This was a ſecret which, without much miſchief, might have been revealed in converſation, but John-

ſon

ſon has thought fit to ſend it abroad in the fourteenth number of the Rambler, with this apology:

'We are not to wonder that moſt fail, amidſt tumult, and ſnares, and dangers, in the obſervance of thoſe precepts which they lay down in ſolitude, ſafety, and tranquillity, with a mind unbiaſſed, and with liberty unobſtructed. It is the condition of our preſent ſtate to ſee more than we can attain; the exacteſt vigilance and caution can never maintain a ſingle day of innocence, much leſs can the utmoſt efforts of incorporated mind reach the ſummits of ſpeculative virtue.'

He farther ſays, 'It is recorded of Sir Mathew Hale that he, for a long time, concealed the conſecration of himſelf to the ſtricter duties of religion, leſt, by ſome flagitious and ſhameful action, he ſhould bring piety into diſgrace *;' and upon this his conduct he ſuggeſts, that 'it may be prudent for a writer, who apprehends that he ſhall not enforce his own maxims by his domeſtic character, to conceal his name that he may not injure them.'

In

* This kind of timidity ſurely ſtands in need of ſome excuſe; for what would become of the world were all religious men ſubjected by the ſame fear? or how would that precept be obeyed, which requires us to let our light ſo ſhine, as that men may ſee our good works? Men in conſpicuous ſtations of life, and in particular, magiſtrates, are under the ſtrongeſt obligations to favour and ſupport the cauſe of religion, ſo it be done without oſtentation. And in private life our duty requires, that the fear of being thought weak or ſuperſtitious ſhould never deter us from making an open profeſſion of our faith. He that in his ſtudy affects to be found with a bible before him, may be juſtly ſuſpected of hypocriſy; but he that, upon the approach of a friend, conveys it away,

In this paſſage, Johnſon ſeems to prepare his readers for that contrariety which is often obſerved between the lives of authors and their writings, or, which is much the ſame, between preceptive and practical wiſdom and virtue, as if they were ſcarcely conſiſtent with each other, whereas, had his acquaintance lain, at this time, as in the latter part of his life it did, with perſons of rank and condition, he might have formed different notions on the ſubject, and been convinced, that all ages, and even the preſent, have afforded examples of men, in whom learning and parts, and even wit, were but auxiliaries to qualities more eſtimable †.

The

away, is guilty of meanneſs, and, of the two, the greater criminal.

† Biſhop Taylor and lord Clarendon were both men of learning and parts, teachers of wiſdom, and exemplary in their lives: the ſame may be ſaid of lord-chancellor Hardwicke and biſhop Hoadly: the two latter, over and above their other great endowments, were claſſical ſcholars, and, what is more, they wrote verſes; yet were they eminent for their ſkill in all the concerns of human life. Of the ſagacity of the laſt, I am able to relate a fact which the biſhop himſelf told me. A man of the name of Fournier, a clergyman and a proſelyte from the Romiſh church, had, upon a franked cover with the biſhop's name to it, forged a promiſſory note for 8800l. The biſhop brought a bill in chancery for a diſcovery of the conſideration of the pretended note, upon which, the defendant, with a view to entrap him, ſent it by his wife to the biſhop, with a permiſſion for him, if he pleaſed, to burn it. The paper was of a ſingular form, and had on it the marks of ſeveral folds, the appearance of a raſure of the word *free*, and was, upon the face of it, in many other reſpects, extremely ſuſpicious; but the biſhop, ſeeing the ſnare that was laid for him, and with a view that theſe evidences of forgery ſhould for ever remain with the note, firſt

made

The above facts and obſervations are meant to ſhew ſome of the moſt conſpicuous features and foibles in Johnſon's character, and go to prove, not only that his ferocity was not ſo terrific, as that any one endued with temper, and diſpoſed to moderation and forbearance, might not only withſtand, but overcome it, but that he had a natural imbecillity about him, ariſing from humanity and pity to the ſufferings of his fellow-creatures, that was prejudicial to his intereſts; and alſo, that he neither ſought nor expected praiſe for thoſe acts of beneficence which he was daily performing, nor looked for any retribution from thoſe who were nouriſhed by his bounty. Indeed, they were ſuch creatures as were incapable of being awed by a ſenſe of his worth, or of diſcerning the motives that actuated him; they were people of the loweſt and vulgareſt minds*, whom idleneſs had made poor, and liberality impudent, and what is to be expected from ſuch, is known to all that are, in the ſlighteſt degree, acquainted with the world; and laſtly, they ſhew his method of accounting for that manifeſt and ſtriking contrariety which, as he ſays, has been often obſerved, between the life of an author and his writings.

made a memorandum of theſe ſeveral particulars, and then, with great temper, returned it to the woman. Had he deſtroyed the note as he was authoriſed, and as almoſt any man elſe, knowing it to be a forgery, would have done, the evidentia rei had been loſt, and the defendant had been in a better condition than he ever could be while the note exiſted. At the hearing of the cauſe, the note, upon the face of it, was condemned, and the biſhop ſecured againſt demand of payment.

* Of ſuch, lord Bacon obſerves, that 'the loweſt virtues draw 'praiſe from them, the middle work in them aſtoniſhment and 'admiration; but of the higher virtues they have no ſenſe or 'perceiving.' Eſſay on Praiſe.

The

The hiſtory of learning furniſhes us with many examples of men who have deviated from the ſtudy of polite literature to that of the hermetic ſcience, or, in plainer Engliſh, to that ſublimer chemiſtry which leads to the tranſmutation of metals; and thoſe, who may have heard that Johnſon exerciſed himſelf in chemical proceſſes, may perhaps think, that his view therein was ſuddenly to become the poſſeſſor of immenſe riches, but I am able to obviate this ſuſpicion, and aſſure them, that his motive thereto was only curioſity, and his end mere amuſement. At the time he frequented the club in Ivy lane, Dyer was going through a courſe of chemiſtry under Dr. Pemberton, of Greſham college, and would ſometimes give us ſuch deſcriptions of proceſſes as were very entertaining, particularly to Johnſon, who would liſten to them attentively. We may ſuppoſe, that in the courſe of his reading, he had acquired ſome knowledge of the theory of the art, and that he wiſhed for an opportunity of reducing that knowledge into practice: he thought that time now come, and though he had no fitter an apartment for a laboratory than the garret over his chambers in the Inner Temple, he furniſhed that with an alembic, with retorts, receivers, and other veſſels adapted to the cheapeſt and leaſt operoſe proceſſes. What his aims were, at firſt, I know not, having forgotten the account he once gave me of the earlieſt of his chemical operations; but I have ſince learned, that they dwindled down to mere diſtillation, and that from ſubſtances of the ſimpleſt and coarſeſt ſort, namely, peppermint, and the dregs of ſtrong beer, from the latter whereof he

was

was able to extract a ſtrong but very nauſeous ſpirit, which all might ſmell, but few choſe to taſte.

Johnſon had now conſiderably extended the circle of his acquaintance, and added to the number of his friends ſundry perſons of diſtinguiſhed eminence: among them were, Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Mr. Edmund Burke, Mr. Beauclerk, and Mr. Langton. With theſe he paſſed much of his time, and was deſirous of being ſtill cloſer connected. How much he delighted in convivial meetings, how he loved converſation, and how ſenſibly he felt the attractions of a tavern, has already been mentioned; and it was but a natural conſequence of theſe diſpoſitions, that he ſhould wiſh for frequent opportunities of indulging them in a way that would free him from domeſtic reſtraints, from the obſervance of hours, and a conformity to the regimen of families. A tavern was the place for theſe enjoyments, and a weekly club was inſtituted for his gratification and the mutual entertainment and delight of its ſeveral members. The firſt movers in this aſſociation were Johnſon and Sir Joſhua Reynolds: the number of perſons included in it was nine: the place of meeting was the Turk's head in Gerrard ſtreet; the day Monday in every week, and the hour of aſſembling ſeven in the evening. To this aſſociation I had the honour of being invited. The members were,

Johnſon,	Mr. Topham Beauclerk,
Sir Joſhua Reynolds,	Mr. Bennet Langton,
Mr. Edmund Burke,	Mr. Anthony Chamier, and
Chriſt. Nugent, M. D.	Myſelf.
Oliver Goldſmith, M. B.	

As ſome of the perſons above-mentioned are happily

pily yet living, and are too eminently known to receive honour from any thing I am able to ſay of them, I ſhall content myſelf with giving the characters of ſuch of them as are now no more.

Dr. Nugent was a phyſician, of the Romiſh communion, and riſing into practice with perſons of that perſuaſion. He was an ingenious, ſenſible, and learned man, of eaſy converſation, and elegant manners. Johnſon had a high opinion of him, and always ſpoke of him in terms of great reſpect.

Goldſmith is well known by his writings to have been a man of genius and of very fine parts; but of his character and general deportment, it is the hardeſt taſk any one can undertake to give a deſcription. I will, however, attempt it, truſting to be excuſed if, in the ſpirit of a faithful hiſtorian, I record as well his ſingularities as his merits.

There are certain memoirs of him extant, from which we learn, that his inclination, co-operating with his fortunes which were but ſcanty, led him into a courſe of life little differing from vagrancy, that deprived him of the benefits of regular ſtudy: it however gratified his humour, ſtored his mind with ideas and ſome knowledge, which, when he became ſettled, he improved by various reading; yet, to all the graces of urbanity he was a ſtranger. With the greateſt pretenſions to poliſhed manners he was rude, and, when he moſt meant the contrary, abſurd. He affected Johnſon's ſtyle and manner of converſation, and, when he had uttered, as he often would, a laboured ſentence, ſo tumid as to be ſcarce intelligible, would aſk, if that was not truly Johnſonian; yet he loved not Johnſon, but rather envied him for his

his parts; and once intreated a friend to deſiſt from praiſing him, 'for in doing ſo', ſaid he, 'you harrow up 'my very ſoul.'

He had ſome wit, but no humour, and never told a ſtory but he ſpoiled it. The following anecdotes will convey ſome idea of the ſtyle and manner of his converſation:

He was uſed to ſay he could play on the German-flute as well as moſt men;—at other times, as well as any man living; and in his poem of the Traveller, has hinted at this attainment in the following lines:

'To kinder ſkies, where gentler manners reign,
'I turn; and France diſplays her bright domain:
'Gay ſprightly land of mirth and ſocial eaſe,
'Pleas'd with thyſelf, whom all the world can pleaſe,
'How often have I led thy ſportive choir,
'With tuneleſs pipe, beſide the murmuring Loire!
'Where ſhading elms along the margin grew,
'And, freſhen'd from the wave, the zephyr flew;
'And haply, though my harſh touch, falt'ring ſtill,
'But mock'd all tune, and marr'd the dancers ſkill,
'Yet would the village praiſe my wond'rous power,
'And dance, forgetful of the noon-tide hour.'

But, in truth, he underſtood not the character in which muſic is written, and played on that inſtrument, as many of the vulgar do, merely by ear. Roubiliac the ſculptor, a merry fellow, once heard him play, and minding to put a trick on him, pretended to be charmed with his performance, as alſo, that himſelf was ſkilled in the art, and intreated him to repeat the air, that he might write it down. Goldſmith readily conſenting, Roubiliac called for paper, and ſcored

thereon a few five-lined ſtaves, which having done, Goldſmith proceeded to play, and Roubiliac to write; but his writing was only ſuch random notes on the lines and ſpaces as any one might ſet down who had ever inſpected a page of muſic. When they had both done, Roubiliac ſhewed the paper to Goldſmith, who looking it over with ſeeming great attention, ſaid it was very correct, and that if he had not ſeen him do it, he never could have believed his friend capable of writing muſic after him.

He would frequently preface a ſtory thus:—'I'll 'now tell you a ſtory of myſelf, which ſome people 'laugh at, and ſome do not.'—

At the breaking up of an evening at a tavern, he intreated the company to ſit down, and told them if they would call for another bottle they ſhould hear one of his bons mots:—they agreed, and he began thus:——'I was once told that Sheridan the player, 'in order to improve himſelf in ſtage-geſtures, had 'looking-glaſſes, to the number of ten, hung about 'his room, and that he practiſed before them; upon 'which I ſaid, then there were ten ugly fellows toge-'ther.'—The company were all ſilent: he aſked why they did not laugh, which they not doing, he, without taſting the wine, left the room in anger.

He once complained to a friend in theſe words:—'Mr. Martinelli is a rude man: I ſaid in his hearing, 'that there were no good writers among the Italians, 'and he ſaid to one that ſat near him, that I was very 'ignorant*.'

'People,' ſaid he, 'are greatly miſtaken in me: a 'notion goes about, that when I am ſilent I mean to

* Mr. Martinelli is an Italian.

'be

'be impudent; but I aſſure you, gentlemen, my ſilence 'ariſes from baſhfulneſs.'

Having one day a call to wait on the late duke, then earl, of Northumberland, I found Goldſmith waiting for an audience in an outer room; I aſked him what had brought him there: he told me an invitation from his lordſhip. I made my buſineſs as ſhort as I could, and, as a reaſon, mentioned, that Dr. Goldſmith was waiting without. The earl aſked me if I was acquainted with him: I told him I was, adding what I thought likely to recommend him. I retired, and ſtaid in the outer room to take him home. Upon his coming out, I aſked him the reſult of his converſation:—'His lordſhip,' ſays he, 'told me he had red my poem,' meaning the Traveller, 'and was much delighted with it; that he was 'going lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and that, hearing 'that I was a native of that country, he ſhould be 'glad to do me any kindneſs.'—And what did you anſwer, aſked I, to this gracious offer?—'Why,' ſaid he, 'I could ſay nothing but that I had a brother 'there, a clergyman, that ſtood in need of help: as 'for myſelf, I have no dependence on the promiſes 'of great men: I look to the bookſellers for ſupport; 'they are my beſt friends, and I am not inclined to 'forſake them for others.'

Thus did this idiot in the affairs of the world, trifle with his fortunes, and put back the hand that was held out to aſſiſt him! Other offers of a like kind he either rejected or failed to improve, contenting himſelf with the patronage of one nobleman, whoſe manſion afforded him the delights of a ſplendid table, and a retreat for a few days from the metropolis.

While I was writing the Hiſtory of Muſic, he, at the club, communicated to me ſome curious matter: I deſired he would reduce it to writing; he promiſed me he would, and deſired to ſee me at his chambers: I called on him there; he ſtepped into a cloſet, and tore out of a printed book ſix leaves that contained what he had mentioned to me.

As he wrote for the bookſellers, we, at the club, looked on him as a mere literary drudge, equal to the taſk of compiling and tranſlating, but little capable of original, and ſtill leſs of poetical compoſition: he had, nevertheleſs, unknown to us, written and addreſſed to the counteſs, afterwards ducheſs, of Northumberland, one of the fineſt poems of the lyric kind that our language has to boaſt of, the ballad 'Turn gentle Hermit 'of the dale*;' and ſurpriſed us with 'The Tra-'veller,' a poem that contains ſome particulars of his own hiſtory. Johnſon was ſuppoſed to have aſſiſted him in it; but he contributed to the perfection of it only four lines: his opinion of it was, that it was the beſt written poem ſince the time of Pope. The favourable reception which this eſſay of his poetical talent met with, ſoon after tempted Goldſmith to the publication of his 'Deſerted Village,' the merits whereof, conſiſting in local particularities and beautiful deſcriptions of rural manners, are ſufficiently known.

His poems are replete with fine moral ſentiments, and beſpeak a great dignity of mind; yet he had no ſenſe of the ſhame, nor dread of the evils, of poverty. In the latter he was at one time ſo involved,

* Printed in his poetical works, vol. I.

that

that for the clamours of a woman, to whom he was indebted for lodging, and for bailiffs that waited to arreſt him, he was equally unable, till he had made himſelf drunk, to ſtay within doors, or go abroad to hawk among the bookſellers his 'Vicar of Wake-'field.' In this diſtreſs he ſent for Johnſon, who immediately went to one of them, and brought back money for his relief.

In his dealings with the bookſellers, he is ſaid to have acted very diſhoneſtly, never fulfilling his engagements. In one year he got of them, and by his plays, the ſum of 1800l. which he diſſipated by gaming and extravagance, and died poor in 1774.

He that can account for the inconſiſtencies of character above-noted, otherwiſe than by ſhewing, that wit and wiſdom are ſeldom found to meet in the ſame mind, will do more than any of Goldſmith's friends were ever able to do. He was buried in the poets' corner in Weſtminſter abbey. A monument was erected for him by a ſubſcription of his friends, and is placed over the entrance into St. Blaſe's chapel. The inſcription thereon was written by Johnſon. This I am able to ſay with certainty, for he ſhewed it to me in manuſcript.

The members of our club, that remain to be ſpoken of, were perſons of leſs celebrity than him above-mentioned, but were better acquainted with the world, and qualified for ſocial intercourſe. Mr. Beauclerk was allied to the St. Alban's family, and took his chriſtian name from Mr. Topham of Windſor, the famous collector of pictures and drawings. To the character of a ſcholar, and a man of fine parts, he added that of a man of faſhion, of which his

dreſs and equipage ſhewed him to be emulous. In the early period of his life he was the exemplar of all who wiſhed, without incurring the cenſure of foppery, to become conſpicuous in the gay world. Travel, and a long reſidence at Rome and at Venice, had given the laſt poliſh to his manners, and ſtored his mind with entertaining information. In painting and ſculpture, his taſte and judgment were accurate, in claſſic literature, exquiſite; and in the knowledge of hiſtory, and the ſtudy of antiquities, he had few equals. His converſation was of the moſt excellent kind; learned, witty, polite, and, where the ſubject required it, ſerious; and over all his behaviour there beamed ſuch a ſunſhine of chearfulneſs and good humour, as communicated itſelf to all around him. He was a great collector of books, and left at his death a library, which, at a ſale by auction, yielded upwards of five thouſand pounds.

Mr. Anthony Chamier was deſcended from a French proteſtant family, that has produced one or more very eminent divines, and were refugees in this country at the end of the laſt century. He was bred to the profeſſion of a ſtock-broker; but, having had a liberal education, his deportment and manner of tranſacting buſineſs diſtinguiſhed him greatly from moſt others of that calling. He had acquired a knowledge of the modern languages, particularly of the Spaniſh, in the ſtudy whereof he took great delight. His connections, at his ſetting out in the world, were of the beſt kind, for very early in his life he was employed by thoſe liberal-minded brothers the Van Neeks, whoſe riches, and general munificence, have ranked them in the ſame claſs of wealthy

wealthy men with the Fuggers of Augſburg, a company of money-dealers, who, in their time, held the balance of the Antwerp exchange, and by their tranſactions at that mart, influenced the politics of all the courts of Europe *. By his dealings in the funds, and, it was ſuppoſed, with the advantage of intelligence which, previous to the concluſion of the peace before the laſt, he had obtained, he acquired ſuch a fortune as enabled him, though young, to quit buſineſs, and become, what indeed he ſeemed by nature intended for, a gentleman. At the beginning of his preſent majeſty's reign, he had a proſpect of going ſecretary to an embaſſy to Spain, and was preparing for it, by the improvement of himſelf in the language of that country, but a change in the appointment of an ambaſſador kept him at home, and gave him opportunity of becoming acquainted with lord Hilſborough, who, upon his being made ſecretary of ſtate the laſt time, took him for his under-ſecretary, in which ſtation he died.

It was Johnſon's original intention, that the number of this our club ſhould not exceed nine, but Mr. Dyer, a member of that in Ivy lane before ſpoken of, and who for ſome years had been abroad, made his appearance among us, and was cordially received. By the recommendation of Mr. Belchier the banker, and member for Southwark, he had obtained an appointment to be one of the commiſſaries in our army in Germany; but, on the concluſion of the peace, he

* A curious account of theſe three brothers may be ſeen in Moreri's dictionary, art. Fugger ou Foucker. Mention of them is alſo made in the journal of Edward VI. inſerted in an appendix to one of the volumes of biſhop Burnet's Hiſtory of the Reformation.

returned to England, very little the better for an employment which few have been known to quit without having made a fortune.

The hours which Johnſon ſpent in this ſociety ſeemed to be the happieſt of his life: he would often applaud his own ſagacity in the ſelection of it, and was ſo conſtant at our meetings as never to abſent himſelf. It is true he came late, but then he ſtayed late, for, as has been already ſaid of him, he little regarded hours. Our evening toaſt was the motto of Padre Paolo, 'Eſto perpetua.' A lady, diſtinguiſhed by her beauty, and taſte for literature, invited us twice to a dinner at her houſe, which I alone was hindered from accepting. Curioſity was her motive, and poſſibly a deſire of intermingling with our converſation the charms of her own. She affected to conſider us as a ſet of literary men, and perhaps gave the firſt occaſion for diſtinguiſhing the ſociety by the name of the literary club, an appellation which it never aſſumed to itſelf.

At theſe our meetings, Johnſon, as indeed he did every where, led the converſation, yet was he far from arrogating to himſelf that ſuperiority, which, ſome years before, he was diſpoſed to contend for. He had ſeen enough of the world to know, that reſpect was not to be extorted, and began now to be ſatisfied with that degree of eminence to which his writings had exalted him. This change in his behaviour was remarked by thoſe who were beſt acquainted with his character, and it rendered him an eaſy and delightful companion. Our diſcourſe was miſcellaneous, but chiefly literary. Politics, the moſt vulgar of all topics, were alone excluded. On that ſubject moſt of us were of the ſame opinion. The Britiſh lion

was

was then licking his wounds, and we drank to the peace of old England *.

The inſtitution of this ſociety was in the winter of 1763, at which time Mr. Garrick was abroad with his wife, who, for the recovery of her health, was ſent to the baths at Padua. Upon his return, he was informed of our aſſociation, and truſted, that the leaſt intimation of a deſire to come among us, would procure him a ready admiſſion, but in this he was miſtaken. Johnſon conſulted me upon it, and when I could find no objection to receiving him, exclaimed:—'He will diſturb us by his buffoonery;'—and afterwards ſo managed matters, that he was never formally propoſed, nor, by conſequence, ever admitted.

This conduct of Johnſon gave me, for the firſt time, to underſtand, that the friendſhip between him and Garrick was not ſo ſtrong as it might be ſuppoſed to be: it was not like that of David and Jonathan; it paſſed not the love of women, and hardly exceeded the ſtrength of an adventitious intimacy: Garrick had a profound veneration for the learning and talents of Johnſon, but was uſed to complain to me, that he was capricious in his friendſhip, and, as he termed it, coquettiſh in his diſplay of it. Johnſon, on his part, hated the profeſſion of a player, and per-

* As I was the only ſeceder from this ſociety, my withdrawing myſelf from it ſeems to require an apology. We ſeldom got together till nine; the enquiry into the contents of the larder, and preparing ſupper, took up till ten; and by the time that the table was cleared, it was near eleven, at which hour my ſervants were ordered to come for me; and, as I could not enjoy the pleaſure of theſe meetings without diſturbing the œconomy of my family, I choſe to forego it.

haps might contemplate with indignation, that diſpoſition of the public, which aſſigns to thoſe who miniſter to their pleaſures, greater rewards than to thoſe whoſe employment it is to ſupply their moſt eſſential wants. He might poſſibly reflect that, in his outſet in life as an inſtructor of youth, his hopes were bounded by the proſpect of five hundred pounds a year, and that the mimetic powers of Garrick, for under that denomination he ranked all his excellencies, produced to the poſſeſſor of them an income of four thouſand.

Theſe are ſuch excuſes for Johnſon's coolneſs towards an old friend as charity might ſuggeſt; but, alas! it had a deeper root, and it is to be feared that it ſprung from envy, a paſſion, which he ſometimes was candid enough to confeſs he was ſubject to, and laboured through his life to eradicate. His behaviour to Garrick was ever auſtere, like that of a ſchoolmaſter to one of his ſcholars *, and he flattered himſelf, that in all he ſaid and did, he ſtood in awe of his frown.—'I was,' ſaid Johnſon once to a friend, 'laſt night behind the ſcenes at Drury-lane, 'and met Davy dreſſed for his part. I was glad to 'ſee him; but I believe he was aſhamed to ſee 'me.'—A ſuppoſition hardly to be admitted, even if he had been dreſſed in the rags of Drugger.

* He aſſumed a right of correcting his enunciation, and, by an inſtance, convinced Garrick that it was ſometimes erroneous.—'You often,' ſaid Johnſon, 'miſtake the emphatical word of a 'ſentence.'—'Give me an example,' ſaid Garrick.—'I cannot,' anſwered Johnſon, 'recollect one; but repeat the ſeventh com-'mandment.'—Garrick pronounced it—'Thou *ſhalt* not commit 'adultery.'—'You are wrong,' ſaid Johnſon: 'it is a negative 'precept, and ought to be pronounced thus:

'Thou ſhalt *not* commit adultery.'

Garrick took his rejection very patiently, and ſhewed his reſentment of it no otherwiſe, than by enquiring of me from time to time how we went on at the club. He would often ſtop at my gate, in his way to and from Hampton, with meſſages from Johnſon relating to his Shakeſpeare, then in the preſs, and aſk ſuch queſtions as theſe:—'Were you at the club 'on Monday night?'—'What did you talk of?'—'Was Johnſon there?'—'I ſuppoſe he ſaid ſome-'thing of Davy—that Davy was a clever fellow in 'his way, full of convivial pleaſantry, but no poet, 'no writer, ha?'—I was vexed at theſe enquiries, and told him, that this perpetual ſolicitude about what was ſaid of him, was unneceſſary, and could only tend to diſturb him; that he might well be content with that ſhare of the public favour which he enjoyed, that he had nothing to do but to poſſeſs it in quietneſs, and that too great an anxiety to obtain applauſe would provoke envy, and tend to intercept, if not totally deprive him of it.

The greateſt of Mr. Garrick's foibles was, a notion of the importance of his profeſſion: he thought that Shakeſpeare and himſelf were, or ought to be, the objects of all mens' attention. When the king of Denmark was in England, he received an order from the lord-chamberlain to entertain that monarch with an exhibition of himſelf in ſix of his principal characters. In his way to London, to receive his inſtructions, he called on me, and told me this as news. I could plainly diſcern in his looks the joy that tranſported him; but he affected to be vexed at the ſhortneſs of the notice, and ſeemed to arraign the wiſdom of our councils, by exclaiming—'You ſee what heads they have!'

Johnſon's

Johnſon's objection to the admiſſion of Garrick may ſeem to be cynical, and to have ariſen from jealouſy or reſentment, but it admits of palliation: the truth is, that Garrick was no diſquiſitor; his reading had been confined, and he could contribute but little to the pleaſures of ſober and inſtructive converſation. Even his knowledge of the world was derived through the medium of the dramatic writers, who, all men know, are not guides to be truſted; and, in his intercourſe with mankind, and manner of conducting buſineſs, he frequently betrayed ſuch ignorance and inattention, as the following inſtance will illuſtrate.

There ſtood near the dwelling of Mr. Garrick at Hampton, and adjoining to his garden next the river, a ſmall houſe, the owner and occupier whereof was Mr. Peele a bookſeller, who had retired from buſineſs. Mr. Peele had often ſaid, that as he knew it would be an accommodation to Mr. Garrick, he had given directions, that at his deceaſe he ſhould have the refuſal of it. A man in the neighbourhood had ſet his eye upon it, and formed a ſcheme to make it his own. He had got intelligence that there was a relation or friend of Mr. Peele's living in the country, and immediately on Mr. Peele's death applied to his executors, pretending that he had a commiſſion from him to purchaſe the houſe at any price; and, upon this ſuggeſtion, procured a conveyance of it to a perſon nominated by him, but under a ſecret truſt for himſelf. Mr. Garrick, ſeeing himſelf thus balked of his hopes, and in danger of being troubled with an ill neighbour, thought he had nothing to do but to complain. He told his ſad ſtory to me, and in a lucky

lucky hour; for, juſt before his entering my houſe, I had been reading the life of the lord-keeper Guildford, and therein a caſe of a ſimilar fraud, againſt which his lordſhip decreed: it was the caſe of the duke of Buckinghamſhire and Ambroſe Phillips, who had purchaſed of the duke an eſtate as for Mr. Heneage Finch, a ſon of the lord Nottingham, but in truth for himſelf, at two thouſand pounds leſs than he would have ſold it for to any but Mr. Finch. Upon hearing Mr. Garrick's ſtory, I ſearched farther, and found the caſe in law-language in Vernon's chancery reports, and giving him a note of it, told him he might file a bill in chancery, and, on the authority of that determination, hope for relief. About ſix months after, I being in town, a meſſage came to me in the evening from Mr. Garrick, ſignifying, that his cauſe was to come on the next morning, and requeſting me to furniſh him with a note of a caſe that I had formerly mentioned to him as reſembling his own. Aſtoniſhed at his remiſſneſs, and knowing that no time was to be loſt, I immediately borrowed the book I had referred him to, and giving it my ſervant, went with it to Drury-lane theatre, where, upon enquiry, I was informed, that he was buſily employed in exhibiting an imitation of a ſpectacle then recent, the proceſſion of the coronation of his preſent majeſty, in an afterpiece to the play for that night. I waited in an outer room till all was over, when in entered Mr. and Mrs. Garrick, and, after giving him time to recover from his fatigue, I told him what I had been doing to help him in his diſtreſs, and produced the book, but his thoughts were ſo wholly taken up by the pageant he

was

was come from, which ſeemed ſtill to be paſſing before his eyes, that he could ſcarcely attend to me, but aſked Mrs. Garrick twenty queſtions about it, how it went off, and whether ſhe did not think the applauſe of the audience great. He then turned to me, took from me the book, and ſaid he ſhould lay it before his counſel. The book was returned in a few days, but I heard nothing of the decree of the court till ſome months after, when meeting with his brother George, in the court of requeſts, I aſked him how the cauſe had gone:—'Oh,' ſaid he, 'with 'us:—the firſt purchaſe is decreed fraudulent, and the 'defendant is condemned in coſts.'

Mr. Garrick's forgetfulneſs and inattention, in a concern that gave him ſome uneaſineſs, is not to be accounted for by thoſe who believe, contrary to the fact, that he was ever ſufficiently awake to his own intereſt, nor indeed by any who were not well acquainted with his character. In all that related to the theatre he was very acute, but in buſineſs of other kinds a novice. His profeſſion was of ſuch a nature, as left him no intervals of thought or cool deliberation: his mind was either elevated to the higheſt pitch of intenſion, or let down to the loweſt degree of remiſſion. In the former ſtate, it was inflated by the ideas with which the courſe of his reading had ſtored his memory; in the latter, it ſunk into an indolent levity, which indulged in jokes, in mimicry, and witticiſms.

In the firſt of theſe ſituations, I have deſcribed him by the relation of his conduct in a law-ſuit: in a ſeaſon of vacuity, he was another man, eaſy and chearful, and

and diſpoſed, out of every thing he ſaw or heard, to extract mirth. The following ſtory I give as an inſtance of his pleaſantry, at times when the buſineſs of the theatre did not occupy his thoughts.

Living at Twickenham, at about two miles diſtance from his houſe at Hampton, I made him, as I frequently did when in the country, an afternoon viſit. It was in the month of Auguſt, and I found him and Mrs. Garrick in the garden, eating figs. He complained that the waſps, which that year were very numerous, had left him very few; and, talking farther about thoſe noxious inſects, told me he had heard, that a perſon near Uxbridge, having ſwallowed one of them in a draught of liquor, had died of the ſting. I told him it was true, for that at a turnpike-meeting at Uxbridge I had dined with the apothecary that had attended him, and he had aſſured me of the fact.—'I 'believe it,' ſaid Mr. Garrick, 'and have been perſuad-'ing this lady,' pointing to Mrs. Garrick, 'to do ſo; 'but I cannot convince her, and yet, ſhe can believe 'the ſtory of St. Urſula and the eleven thouſand vir-'gins!'—Mrs. Garrick, it is no ſecret, is of the Romiſh perſuaſion.

Davies, in his life of Mr. Garrick, has mentioned a variety of particulars that do honour to his memory. Among others, he gives ſeveral inſtances of liberality to his friends. Johnſon would frequently ſay, that he gave away more money than any man of his income in England; and his readineſs to give the profits of a night to public charities, and to families and individuals in diſtreſs, will long be remembered. He was the firſt that attempted to reform the ſtage, by baniſhing from it all profaneneſs and immorality, and by expunging

punging from the plays acted at his theatre, every expreſſion capable of any other than a good meaning. And whereas it had for many years been the cuſtom, at one or more of the theatres, to indulge the mob, in the evening of the lord-mayor's day, with the repreſentation of 'The London Cuckolds,' a comedy written by Ravenſcroft in times of great licentiouſneſs, and abounding in ſcenes of vulgar humour, he paid a handſome compliment to the citizens, and ſhewed his regard for the welfare of youth, by diſcontinuing the practice, and ſubſtituting in its place the affecting tragedy of 'George Barnwell,' a play adapted to the ſituation and circumſtances of city apprentices, and affording an inſtructive leſſon of diſcretion and morality.

Notwithſtanding the perpetual competition between him and Rich, for the favour of the town, they lived together upon the moſt friendly terms. Rich, who was never celebrated either for his wit or his underſtanding, once made him a very elegant compliment: the occaſion was this: Rich had improved his houſe at Covent garden, by altering the diſpoſition of the ſeats, ſo as to accommodate a greater number of ſpectators than formerly it would, and Mr. Garrick wiſhing to ſee theſe improvements, Mr. Rich invited him to the houſe, and went with him all over it. In the courſe of their ſurvey, Mr. Garrick aſked, in the language of the theatre, what ſum of money the houſe would hold.——'Sir,' ſaid Mr. Rich, 'that queſtion I am at preſent unable to anſwer; 'but were Mr. Garrick to appear but one night on my 'ſtage, I ſhould be able to tell to the utmoſt ſhil-'ling.'

After

After all that has been ſaid of Mr. Garrick, envy muſt own, that he owed his celebrity to his merit; and yet, of that himſelf ſeemed ſo diffident, that he practiſed ſundry little, but innocent arts, to inſure the favour of the public. He kept up an intereſt in the city by appearing, about twice in a winter, at Tom's coffee-houſe in Cornhill, the uſual rendezvous of young merchants at 'change time; and frequented a club, eſtabliſhed for the ſake of his company, at the Queen's-arms tavern in St. Paul's church-yard, where were uſed to aſſemble Mr. Samuel Sharpe the ſurgeon, Mr. Paterſon the city-ſolicitor, Mr. Draper the bookſeller, Mr. Clutterbuck a mercer, and a few others; they were none of them drinkers, and in order to make a reckoning, called only for French wine. Theſe were his ſtanding council in theatrical affairs, and were of uſe to him in moderating his reſentment after thoſe riots at his theatre, which would ſometimes happen, and the indignation he once felt upon an attack on his dwelling-houſe, in which the windows thereof were broken.

He had alſo a ſtrong party of friends at Batſon's coffee-houſe, and among them Dr. Wilſon a phyſician, a man of great learning*, but no practice, who having an eaſy fortune and no family, and being maſter of his own time, was at liberty to indulge himſelf in a variety of purſuits and humours that diſtinguiſhed him from moſt other men. He lodged in an obſcure part of the town, and ſpent his mornings in mathematical ſtudies; but at noon was conſtantly to

* He was the editor of the works of Benjamin Robins, publiſhed in two volumes 8vo.

be ſeen at Batſon's, with a circle of perſons round him, whom he entertained with his converſation. He had no taſte for polite literature or ſtage entertainments; but in his old age took it into his head to be an admirer of Mr. Garrick, and ſeldom failed to be at his theatre, whenever he had a part in the play of the night. His conſtant appearance there had procured him almoſt a preſcriptive right to a particular ſeat in the pit. In that region of the houſe he was the firſt, and almoſt the loudeſt applauder of Mr. Garrick, and his praiſes were the chief ſubject of his diſcourſe the ſucceeding day. To this perſon, as to a city-friend, Mr. Garrick held himſelf obliged, and by many perſonal civilities he courted his favour.

Such as thoſe above noted were the foibles in the character of that celebrated actor of whom I have been ſpeaking, and ſuch were the arts which he practiſed to acquire and enſure popularity; arts as unneceſſary as they were innocent, ſeeing, that almoſt from the time he firſt became known, he was in the actual poſſeſſion of that applauſe which he was ſeeking, and received from the public an ample reward of reputation, as well for the part he acted in ſocial life, as for his excellent performance on the ſtage.

Beſides Mr. Garrick, there were others that were deſirous of becoming members of this our club, the fame whereof had ſpread abroad, and induced many, who hoped to acquire a reputation for literature, to wiſh for an admiſſion among us. That unfortunate divine, as he was called, Dr. William Dodd, was one of the number, and made a ſecret effort for this purpoſe. This perſon, at that time, dwelt with his wife in an obſcure corner of Hounſlow heath, near

near a village called Worton; but kept, in a back lane near him, a girl who went by the name of Kennedy. His pretenſions to learning, and eſpecially to claſſical erudition, were very great; and he had in his houſe a few young gentlemen, who, at very expenſive rates, were committed to his care, as to an academy, for inſtruction. A brother of his wife's rented ſome land of me, and of him I learned from time to time many particulars reſpecting his character and manner of living, which latter, as he repreſented it, was ever ſuch as his viſible income would no way account for. He ſaid that he was the moſt importunate ſuitor for preferment ever known, and that himſelf had been the bearer of letters and meſſages to great men, ſoliciting promotion to vacant livings, and had hardly eſcaped kicking down ſtairs. Dodd's wiſh to be received into our ſociety was conveyed to us only by a whiſper, and that being the caſe, all oppoſition to his admiſſion became unneceſſary.

Johnſon was now at eaſe in his circumſtances: he wanted his uſual motive to impel him to the exertion of his talents, neceſſity, and he ſunk into indolence. Whoever called in on him at about midday, found him and Levett at breakfaſt, Johnſon in deſhabille, as juſt riſen from bed, and Levett filling out tea for himſelf and his patron alternately, no converſation paſſing between them. All that viſited him at theſe hours, were welcome. A night's reſt, and breakfaſt, ſeldom failed to refreſh and fit him for diſcourſe, and whoever withdrew went too ſoon. His invitations to dinners abroad were numerous, and he ſeldom balked them. At evening parties, where were

no cards, he very often made one; and from theſe, when once engaged, moſt unwillingly retired.

In the relaxation of mind, which almoſt any one might have foreſeen would follow the grant of his penſion, he made little account of that lapſe of time, on which, in many of his papers, he ſo ſeverely moralizes. And, though he was ſo exact an obſerver of the paſſing minutes, as frequently, after his coming from church, to note in his diary how many the ſervice took up in reading, and the ſermon in preaching; he ſeemed to forget how many years had paſſed ſince he had begun to take in ſubſcriptions for his edition of Shakeſpeare. Such a torpor had ſeized his faculties, as not all the remonſtrances of his friends were able to cure: applied to ſome minds, they would have burned like cauſtics, but Johnſon felt them not: to other objects he was ſufficiently attentive, as I ſhall preſently ſhew.

In the performance of the engagement I am under, I find myſelf compelled to make public, as well thoſe particulars of Johnſon that may be thought to abaſe as thoſe that exalt his character. Among the former, may be reckoned the credit he for ſome time gave to the idle ſtory of the Cock-lane ghoſt, concerning which the following facts are the leaſt unworthy of being noted. In the month of January 1762, it was reported, that at a houſe in Cock lane near Weſt Smithfield, there were heard certain noiſes, accompanied with extraordinary circumſtances, tending to the diſcovery of the death of a young woman who was ſaid to have been deſtroyed by poiſon. The agent in this buſineſs was a girl, who pretended, that the

the ſpirit of the deceaſed appeared to her, and terrified her with the noiſes above-mentioned. This report drew many perſons to the houſe, who, being thus aſſembled, put ſeveral queſtions to the girl, and received anſwers, as from the ghoſt, deſcribing the circumſtances of the poiſoning, and a promiſe, by an affirmative ſignal, that it would attend one of the queriſts into the vault under the church of St. John, Clerkenwell, where the body was depoſited, and give a token of its preſence by a knock upon the coffin: it was therefore determined to make trial of the exiſtence or veracity of the ſuppoſed ſpirit; and it was then advertiſed, that the perſon to whom the promiſe was made, was about to viſit the vault, and accordingly the whole company preſent adjourned to the church. He who had a claim to the performance of the promiſe, and one more, went into the vault, and ſolemnly required to hear the ſignal; but nothing more enſued. The perſon accuſed of the poiſoning, with ſeveral others, then deſcended the vault, but no effect was perceived. It was, therefore, the opinion of the whole aſſembly, that the girl had ſome art of making or counterfeiting particular noiſes, and that there was no agency of any higher cauſe.

Johnſon, whoſe ſentiments with reſpect to ſupernatural agency are diſcoverable in many parts of his writings, was prompted by curioſity to viſit this place, and wait for the appearance of the ghoſt. Mr. Saunders Welch, his intimate friend, would have diſſuaded him from his purpoſe, urging, that it would expoſe him to ridicule; but all his arguments had no effect; he went to the houſe, and, as it is ſuppoſed, into the

church, and gave countenance to the vulgar expectation, that the ghoſt would appear; but at length, being convinced that the whole tranſaction was an impoſture, he drew up, as may be inferred from the ſtyle and advertiſement at the end of the paper, an account of the detection thereof, publiſhed in the Gentleman's Magazine for February 1762.

Soon after this, the impoſture being more clearly and even to demonſtration detected, the perſons concerned in it were proſecuted, and underwent a puniſhment ſuited to their offence.

What Mr. Welch foretold, in his advice to Johnſon, touching this impoſture, was now verified: he was cenſured for his credulity; his wiſdom was arraigned, and his religious opinions reſolved into ſuperſtition. A reverend divine of the time, who had taken effectual care by his conduct to avoid the like imputations, but was enough diſtinguiſhed by a greater folly, political enthuſiaſm, exhibited him to ridicule in a ſatyrical poem, and revived the remembrance of that engagement to the public, which, by this, and other inſtances of the laxity of his mind, he ſeemed not much inclined to fulfil.

Nor was this all: that facetious gentleman Mr. Foote, who, upon the ſtrength and ſucceſs of his ſatyrical vein in comedy, had aſſumed the name of the modern Ariſtophanes, and at his theatre, had long entertained the town with caricatures of living perſons, with all their ſingularities and weakneſſes, thought that Johnſon at this time was become a fit ſubject for ridicule, and that an exhibition of him in a drama written for the purpoſe, in which himſelf ſhould reſent Johnſon, and in his mien, his garb, and his ſpeech,

ſpeech, ſhould diſplay all his comic powers, would yield him a golden harveſt. Johnſon was appriſed of his intention; and gave Mr. Foote to underſtand, that the licence under which he was permitted to entertain the town, would not juſtify the liberties he was accuſtomed to take with private characters, and that if he perſiſted in his deſign, himſelf would be a ſpectator of his diſgrace, and would, by a ſevere chaſtiſement of his repreſentative on the ſtage, and in the face of the whole audience, convince the world, that, whatever were his infirmities, or even his foibles, they ſhould not be made the ſport of the public, or the means of gain to any one of his profeſſion *.

Foote,

* Had Johnſon been provoked to an exerciſe of his proweſs on this occaſion, it would not have been the firſt diſplay of his reſentment on the ſtage of a theatre. He was once with Garrick at the repreſentation of a play in his native city of Lichfield, when, having taken his ſeat in a chair placed on the ſtage, he had ſoon a call to quit it. A Scots officer, who had no good-will towards him, perſuaded an innkeeper of the town to take it, and he did as he was bid. Johnſon, on his return, finding his ſeat full, civilly told the intruder, that by going out it was not his intention to give it up, and demanded it as his right: the innkeeper, encouraged by the officer, ſeeming reſolved to maintain his ſituation, Johnſon expoſtulated the matter with him; but finding him obſtinate, lifted up the chair, the man ſitting in it, and, with ſuch an Herculean force, flung both to the oppoſite ſide of the ſtage, that the Scotſman cried out, 'Damn him, he has broke his 'limbs;' but that not being the caſe, Johnſon having thus emptied the chair, and Mr. Walmſley interpoſing, he reſumed his ſeat in it, and with great compoſure ſat out the play.

Johnſon had great confidence in his corporeal ſtrength, and, from this and ſome other particulars in his life, I am inclined to think he was vain of it. Such foibles are not uncommon in the greateſt characters. Sir Iſaac Newton, at the age of four-

Foote, upon this intimation, had diſcretion enough to deſiſt from his purpoſe. Johnſon entertained no reſentment againſt him, and they were ever after friends.

Johnſon was inſenſible to the effects of this abuſe; but the poem above-mentioned had brought to remembrance, that his edition of Shakeſpeare had long been due. His friends took the alarm, and, by all the arts of reaſoning and perſuaſion, laboured to convince him, that having taken ſubſcriptions for a work in which he had made no progreſs, his credit was at ſtake. He confeſſed he was culpable, and promiſed from time to time to begin a courſe of ſuch reading as was neceſſary to qualify him for the work: this was no more than he had formerly done in an engagement with Coxeter, to whom he had bound himſelf to write the life of Shakeſpeare, but he never could be prevailed on to begin it, ſo that, even now, it was queſtioned whether his promiſes were to be relied on. For this reaſon, Sir Joſhua Reynolds, and ſome other of his friends, who were more concerned for his reputation than himſelf ſeemed to be, contrived to entangle him by a wager, or ſome other pecuniary engagement, to perform his taſk by a certain time, and this, together poſſibly with ſome diſtruſt of the continuance of his mental powers, ſet him to work; but, as he had been remiſs in making collections for the purpoſe, he

ſcore, would ſtrip up his ſhirt-ſleeve to ſhew his muſcular, brawny arm, and relate how dextrous he was in his youth at boxing. And an intimate friend of mine, a ſerjeant at law, of the firſt eminence in his profeſſion, who had nearly loſt the uſe of his feet, was uſed to relate to me his dancing whole nights, when a young man, without feeling the leaſt wearineſs.

found

found it an irkſome taſk. Theobald declares, that to ſettle the text of his author, and to elucidate obſcure paſſages in him, he had found it neceſſary to peruſe a great number of plays and other publications, to the very titles of moſt whereof it is certain Johnſon was a ſtranger. He, it is true, had red as many old Engliſh books as came in his way, but he had never ſought after any ſuch; he was no collector, and in fact was deſtitute of materials for his work. All therefore that he did, or could do, after the waſte of ſo much time, was, to read over his author in the former editions, and ſolicit help from his friends; who, if he is not miſtaken in his aſſertion, were but ſlack in offering him aſſiſtance. To me, among others, he did the honour of ſending for ſuch notes as he thought I might have made in the courſe of my reading. Mr. Garrick was his meſſenger, as he frequently paſſed by my gate in the country; and, though I was at that time deeply engaged in the Hiſtory of Muſic, I furniſhed him with a few remarks, which, unimportant as they are, he thought fit to inſert. Others, more valuable, he got from ſuch of his friends as were at leiſure to aſſiſt him.

The year 1765 gave to the world an edition of Shakeſpeare's dramatic works by Samuel Johnſon, the greateſt proficient in vernacular erudition, and one of the ableſt critics of his time. Much had been expected from it, and little now appeared to have been performed; a few conjectural emendations of the text, and ſome ſcattered remarks on particular paſſages, were all that was preſented to our view that had any pretence to novelty, except

ſome

ſome general obſervations, which ſerve to illuſtrate the beauties and mark the defects of the ſeveral plays, and are inſerted at the end of each.

For the apparent meagreneſs of the work, the paucity of the notes, and other evidences of the editor's want of induſtry, and indeed unfitneſs for the office of a ſcholiaſt, ſo far as it regards the illuſtration of the text, ſome atonement, it muſt be confeſſed, is made by the preface, wherein, as if the author had reſerved himſelf for one great effort of his genius, all the powers of eloquence and critical erudition are diſplayed. In truth, it is an eſſay on dramatic poeſy in general, in which, with a degree of perſpicacity that had never before been exerciſed on the ſubject, he has exhibited the perfections of his author in a blaze of ſplendour that diſtracts us with its radiance. To attemper our admiration, he has, however, thought fit to note the ſlumbers of even this great genius, his violations of hiſtorical truth, his deviations from dramatic regularity, his low conceits, and the frequent recurrence of ſcenes that ſuſpend actions of importance, and, wherever interpoſed, are excreſcences; and this not in a ſtyle of perfunctory diſquiſition, but with ſuch a degree of aſperity as critics diſcover when they are criticiſing the works of a rival.

For thus detracting from the merit of his favourite, Mr. Garrick was to the higheſt degree exaſperated with Johnſon: he reproached him, though not to his face, with want of feeling and the knowledge of human nature, of which, he ſaid, he underſtood nothing, but what he had learned from books:——

'All

'All that he writes,' added he, 'comes from his head: 'Shakeſpeare, when he ſat down to write, dipped his 'pen into his own heart*.'

* The recollection of this forcible and juſt expreſſion, which Mr. Garrick uttered to me, induces me to relate a tranſaction, that may ſerve to prove, how deeply Shakeſpeare was ſkilled in the ſcience of human nature, and that his imagination could ſuggeſt ſentiments and language ſuitable to characters and ſituations, with which he could not be ſuppoſed ever to have been converſant. No one thinks that he had ever been a witneſs to ſuch a ſcene as that in Macbeth, where the lady, who had excited her huſband to the murder of the king, is herſelf reſtrained from the perpetration of it by the ſole reflection, that in his ſleep he reſembled her father: yet ſee how wonderfully his repreſentation of it accords with the workings of nature.

A few years ſince, and while I was chairman of the quarter-ſeſſions for the county of Middleſex, an indictment came before me for trial at Hicks's-hall, the ground whereof was the following caſe. A veſſel, moored by a hawſer or cable-rope, was lying in the Thames near Wapping, at a time when a barge was driving up the river with ſo ſtrong a tide, that the men on board her were in great danger of running, as they call it, athwart the hawſer and of overſetting. To prevent this miſchief, a young active man, who guided the barge, leaped into the veſſel, a liberty in ſuch caſes always allowed, and looſening the end of the hawſer from what it was tied to, let it drop. The men on board the veſſel, ignorant perhaps of the uſage, oppoſed the young man in his attempt, and a fray enſued, in which, provoked to reſiſtance, he ſeized a hand-ſpike, and with it knocked one of the ſailors down. The noiſe of this ſcuffle drew up the maſter, a perſon advanced in years, who all the while was under deck, and he being told what had paſſed, aſked the ſtranger what he meant by knocking his man down.—'I did it,' anſwered he, 'in my own 'defence; and if you had been in his place, and your old grey 'locks had not put me in mind of my own father, I would have 'knocked you down too.'—The very ſentiment that reſtrained lady Macbeth from the murder of Duncan:

'——————— Had he not reſembled
'My father as he ſlept, I had don't,'

Johnſon

Johnſon ſeemed to be conſcious that this work would fall ſhort of the expectations it had raiſed, and endeavoured to ward off the cenſure of the public by an inſinuation in the preface, that his friends had been backward in furniſhing him with aſſiſtance. The paſſage is pretty ſtrongly pointed, and is here given in his own words.

'Having claſſed the obſervations of others, I was 'at laſt to try what I could ſubſtitute for their miſ-'takes, and how I could ſupply their omiſſions. I 'collated ſuch copies as I could procure, and wiſhed 'for more, but have not found the collectors of theſe 'rarities very communicative. Of the editions which 'chance or kindneſs put into my hands, I have given 'an enumeration, that I may not be blamed for neg-'lecting what I had not the power to do.'

Few there were who ſaw this paſſage, and knew that Mr. Garrick had the earlieſt editions of all Shakeſpeare's plays, but conſtrued this into a reproach on him; in that ſenſe he underſtood it, and it gave him great offence. To clear himſelf of the imputation of a conduct ſo unfriendly, he proteſted to me, that his collection had ever been acceſſible to Johnſon, and that himſelf had ſignified, that any or all the books in it were at his ſervice; and, farther to convince me, he, at the next viſit I made him, called in his man Charles, and bade him relate to me his inſtructions reſpecting the uſe of his library, or the loan of books to Johnſon.—'Sir,' ſaid the man, 'I was told to let Mr. Johnſon have what-'ever books he wanted; but he never applied for 'any*.'

To

* Mr. Garrick knew not what riſque he ran by this offer. Johnſon

To ſay the truth, Mr. Garrick was rather forward in offering the uſe of his library to the writers of the time: he did it to Mr. Whalley, when editing the works of Ben Jonſon, and to Dr. Percy, the collector and publiſher of the 'Reliques of ancient Engliſh 'poetry.' His view, as I conjecture, was, to receive, in return for his kindneſs, thanks, with perhaps ſome additional compliment; and in theſe two inſtances he was gratified with both. I imagine that Johnſon was unwilling to buy the favour intended him at that price, and that therefore he declined it.

We are not to ſuppoſe that the publication of Shakeſpeare, a work undertaken without any impulſe, and executed with reluctance, would greatly add to the literary reputation of Johnſon; yet ſuch was the character he had acquired by his dictionary, and other of his writings, that the heads of the univerſity of Dublin thought him worthy of the higheſt academical honour that it was in their power to confer, and accordingly, on the twenty-third day of July 1765, he was, by them, preſented with a diploma, creating him doctor in both laws; a diſtinction the more to be valued as it was unſolicited, and a voluntary teſtimony of the eſteem in which he was held by that learned body. The cauſes aſſigned for beſtowing

ſon had ſo ſtrange a forgetfulneſs of obligations of this ſort, that few who lent him books ever ſaw them again. Among the books in his library, at the time of his deceaſe, I found a very old and curious edition of the works of Politian, which appeared to belong to Pembroke college, Oxford. It was probably taken out of the library when he was preparing to publiſh a part of that author, viz. in 1734, and had been uſed as his own for upwards of fifty years.

it are contained in the following words, part of the inſtrument, 'ob egregiam ſcriptorum elegantiam et 'utilitatem.'

His great affection for our own univerſities, and particularly his attachment to Oxford, prevented Johnſon from receiving this honour as it was intended, and he never aſſumed the title which it conferred. He was as little pleaſed to be called Doctor in conſequence of it, as he was with the title of Domine, which a friend of his once incautiouſly addreſſed him by. He thought it alluded to his having been a ſchool-maſter; and, though he has ably vindicated Milton from the reproach that Salmaſius meant to fix on him, by ſaying that he was of that profeſſion*, he wiſhed to have it forgot, that himſelf had ever been driven to it as the means of ſubſiſtence, and had failed in the attempt.

Johnſon was now arrived at the fifty-ſixth year of his age, and had actually attained to that ſtate of independence, which before he could only affect. He was now in poſſeſſion of an income that freed him from the apprehenſions of want, and exempted him from the neceſſity of mental labour. He had diſcharged his obligations to the public, and, with no incumbrance of a family, or any thing to controul his wiſhes or deſires, he had his mode of living to chuſe. Bleſt with what was to him a competence, he had it now in his power to ſtudy, to meditate, and to put in practice a variety of good reſolutions, which, almoſt from his firſt entrance into life, he had been making.

* See his life of Milton among the lives of the poets.

Some

Some ſpecimens of theſe have been given in a collection of prayers and devotional exerciſes lately publiſhed by his direction, to which I could add a great number. They are the effuſions of a fervent piety, and the reſult of moſt ſevere examinations of himſelf in his hours of retirement; and have for their objects, early riſing, a good uſe of time, abſtinence, the ſtudy of the Scriptures, and a conſtant attendance on divine worſhip; in the performance of all which duties he ſeems to conſtrue his frequent interruptions into criminal remiſſneſs. One extract from his diary I however here inſert, for the purpoſe of ſhewing the ſtate of his mind at about the beginning of the year 1766.

'Since the laſt reception of the Sacrament, I hope I 'have no otherwiſe grown worſe, than as continuance 'in ſin makes the ſinner's condition more dangerous. 'Since laſt New-year's day, I have riſen every morning 'by eight, at leaſt, not after nine: which is more 'ſuperiority over my habits than I have ever before 'been able to obtain. Scruples ſtill diſtreſs me. My 'reſolution, with the bleſſing of God, is, to contend 'with them, and, if I can, to conquer them.

'My reſolutions are,

'To conquer ſcruples.
'To read the bible this year.
'To try to riſe more early.
'To ſtudy divinity.
'To live methodically.
'To oppoſe idleneſs.
'To frequent divine worſhip.'

It was a frequent practice with him, in his addreſſes to the divine Majeſty, to commemorate and recommend to mercy his wife and departed friends; and the knowledge thereof has induced a ſuſpicion, that he adopted the Romiſh tenet of Purgatory. To clear his memory from this imputation, I am neceſſitated to mention a few particulars which I learned from him in converſation, that may ſerve to ſhew, that no ſuch concluſion is to be drawn from his practice in this reſpect; for that his acquieſcence therein aroſe from a controverſy, which, about the year 1715, was agitated between certain divines of a Proteſtant communion, that profeſſed to deny, not leſs than they did the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation, that of purgatory.

Theſe were, the non-juring clergy of the time; of whom, and alſo of their writings, Johnſon was ever uſed to ſpeak with great reſpect. One of them, Dr. Thomas Brett, was a man profoundly ſkilled in ritual literature, as appears by a diſſertation of his, printed, together with a collection of ancient liturgies, in 1720*; and he, as I infer from the ſtyle of the book and the method of reaſoning therein, wrote a tract intitled, 'Reaſons for reſtoring ſome prayers and directions, 'as they ſtand in the communion-ſervice of the firſt 'Engliſh reformed liturgy, compiled by the biſhops 'in the ſecond and third years of king Edward 'VI.' among which he argues for the following pe-

* Johnſon once told me, he had heard his father ſay, that when he was young in trade, king Edward the ſixth's firſt liturgy was much enquired for, and fetched a great price; but that the publication of this book, which contained the whole communion office as it ſtands in the former, reduced the price of it to that of a common book.

tion, part of the prayer for the whole ſtate of Chriſt's church, ſince called a prayer for the whole ſtate of Chriſt's church militant here on earth. 'We 'commend unto thy mercye, O Lord, all other thy 'ſeruauntes, which are departed hence from us, with 'the ſigne of faythe, and nowe do reſte in the ſlepe of 'peace: Graunte unto them, we beſeche thee, thy 'mercy, and euerlaſtyng peace, and that at the daie 'of the generall reſurreccion, we and all they which 'bee of the miſticall body of thy ſonne, may altogether 'bee ſet on his right hand, and heare that his moſt 'ioyfull voice: Come unto me, O ye that be bleſſed 'of my father, and poſſeſſe the kingdome whiche is 'prepared for you from the begynning of the worlde: 'Graunt this, O Father, for Jeſus Chriſtes ſake, our 'onely mediatour and aduocate.'

He firſt ſhews, that the recommending the dead to the mercy of God is nothing of the remains of popery, but a conſtant uſage of the primitive church, and for this aſſertion, he produces the authority of Tertullian, who flouriſhed within an hundred years after the death of the apoſtle St. John, and alſo, the authority of St. Cyprian, St. Cyril, St. Ambroſe, St. Epiphanius, St. Chryſoſtom, and St. Auguſtine, by citations from the ſeveral writings of thoſe fathers.

He then argues, that this cuſtom neither ſuppoſes the modern purgatory, nor gives encouragement to libertiniſm and vice; that the ancient church believed the recommending the dead a ſerviceable office; that the cuſtom ſeems to have gone upon this principle, that ſupreme happineſs is not to be expected till the reſurrection, and that the interval

between death and the end of the world is a ſtate of imperfect bliſs; the church therefore, concludes he, might believe her prayers for good people would improve their condition, and raiſe the ſatisfactions of this period.

No one will ſay that theſe are mean authorities, or object to the practice of thus recommending the dead, as an innovation, excepting thoſe perſons who reject all tradition in matters of religion. Bucer was one that did, and, therefore, being conſulted in the reviſal of king Edward's firſt liturgy, he argued, that there being no expreſs warrant in Scripture for the practice, prayer for the dead was ſinful; and, accordingly, the words contended for were omitted in the ſecond.

This tract was, with great acuteneſs, and no leſs learning, anſwered by another nonjuring divine, in one intitled 'No ſufficient reaſons for reſtoring ſome 'prayers and directions of king Edward the ſixth's 'liturgy.' A reply was given to it, and the controverſy was carried on to a great length; the reſult of it was, a ſchiſm among the nonjurors: thoſe, for reſtoring the prayers, compiled a new communion-office; others, who were againſt widening the breach with the national church, choſe to abide by the preſent form; and this diverſity of ſentiments and practice was, as Johnſon once told me, the ruin of the nonjuring cauſe.

In the ſtudy of this controverſy, which I have reaſon to think intereſted Johnſon very deeply, he ſeems to have taken part with Dr. Brett and the ſeparatiſts his followers, whoſe conduct is accounted for and vindicated, in the diſſertation on liturgies above-mentioned.

Such

Such as are diſpoſed to charge Johnſon with weakneſs and ſuperſtition, and are ſo weak as to inſinuate that, becauſe he recommended his deceaſed wife and friends to the divine mercy, (though with the qualifying words, 'ſo far as it may be lawful') he muſt have been popiſhly affected, or a believer in the doctrine of purgatory, may hence learn to be leſs ſevere in their cenſures, and lament their ignorance of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, which would have taught them, that the practice prevailed, long before popery was eſtabliſhed, or purgatory thought of; and that, though it may not upon the whole be defenſible, there is more to be ſaid for it, than many of the enemies to his memory are able to anſwer *.

And to thoſe of his friends, who think that, for the ſake of his reputation, the prayers and meditations, in which theſe ſentiments have appeared, ſhould have been ſuppreſſed, it ought ſurely to be an anſwer, that they were put into the hands of the reverend divine, who, to my knowledge, attended him with great affection and aſſiduity through his laſt illneſs, with an expreſs charge to commit them to the preſs, and who, if he had forborne this friendly office, had deprived a charitable and laudable inſtitution of a benefit, which the performance of it was intended to confer.

With a view to improve the leiſure he now enjoyed, and ſeemingly determined to reform thoſe habits of indolence, which, in the former part of his life, he had

* Johnſon in his early years aſſociated with this ſect of nonjurors, and from them, probably, imbibed many of his religious and political principles.

contracted, he removed from the Temple into a houſe in Johnſon's court, Fleet ſtreet, and invited thither his friend Mrs. Williams. An upper room, which had the advantages of a good light and free air, he fitted up for a ſtudy, and furniſhed with books, choſen with ſo little regard to editions or their external appearance, as ſhewed they were intended for uſe, and that he diſdained the oſtentation of learning. Here, he was in a ſituation and circumſtances that enabled him to enjoy the viſits of his friends, and to receive them in a manner ſuitable to the rank and condition of many of them. A ſilver ſtandiſh, and ſome uſeful plate, which he had been prevailed on to accept as pledges of kindneſs from ſome who moſt eſteemed him, together with furniture that would not have diſgraced a better dwelling, baniſhed thoſe appearances of ſqualid indigence, which, in his leſs happy days, diſguſted thoſe who came to ſee him.

In one of his diaries he noted down a reſolution to take a ſeat in the church: this he might poſſibly do about the time of this his removal. The church he frequented was that of St. Clement Danes, which, though not his pariſh-church, he preferred to that of the Temple, which I recommended to him, as being free from noiſe, and, in other reſpects, more commodious. His only reaſon was, that in the former he was beſt known. He was not conſtant in his attendance on divine worſhip; but, from an opinion peculiar to himſelf, and which he once intimated to me, ſeemed to wait for ſome ſecret impulſe as a motive to it.

I could

I could never collect from his diſcourſe, that he was drawn to public worſhip by the charms of pulpit eloquence, or any affection for popular preachers, who, in general, are the worſt; nor can I form any judgment of the value he ſet on it, having never been preſent with him at church but once, and that at a time, when, in compliment to him, as it may be ſuppoſed, the preacher gave us a ſermon, that red like a Saturday's Rambler *, and was, by many, ſoon diſcovered to have been caſt in the ſame mould, or, in other words, of Johnſon's compoſing; but he ſeemed to think it a duty to accept in good part the endeavours of all public inſtructors, however meanly qualified for the office, and ever to forbear exerciſing his critical talents on the effuſions of men inferior in learning and abilities to himſelf. Probably he, on ſuch occaſions, recollected the quaint diſtich of Herbert:

'The worſt have ſomething good; where all want
'ſenſe,
'God takes the text and preacheth patience.'

Or he might have red, among the eſſays of th Meſſieurs of Port-Royal, one that teaches us how to profit by bad preaching.

The Sundays which he paſſed at home were, nevertheleſs, ſpent in private exerciſes of devotion †, and

* The Ramblers publiſhed on Saturdays were generally on religious or moral ſubjects.

† He was accuſtomed on theſe days to read the Scriptures, and particularly the Greek Teſtament, with the paraphraſe of Eraſmus.

and ſanctified by acts of charity of a ſingular kind: on that day he accepted of no invitation abroad, but gave a dinner to ſuch of his poor friends as might elſe have gone without one.

He had little now to conflict with but what he called his morbid melancholy, which, though oppreſſive, had its intermiſſions, and left him the free exerciſe of all his faculties, and the power of enjoying the converſation of his numerous friends and viſitants. Theſe reliefs he owed in a great meaſure to the uſe of opium, which, as I have elſewhere mentioned, he was accuſtomed to take in large quantities, the effect whereof was generally ſuch an exhilaration of his ſpirits as he ſometimes ſuſpected for intoxication.

I am now about to mention a remarkable era of his life, diſtinguiſhed by a connexion that, for many years, was a ſource of great ſatisfaction and comfort to him. It was a friendſhip, contracted, as his diary imports, in 1765, with Mr. Thrale, a brewer, in Southwark, who, though a follower of a trade, which in other countries is lightly thought of, yet as in this it implies great opulence, and the power of conducing in various ways to the intereſts of the community, ranked as a gentleman. He had received the benefit of an univerſity education, and was a repreſentative in parliament, as his father had been, for the above-mentioned borough; and in every view of his character, could not but be deemed a valuable addi-

Very late in his life he formed a reſolution to read the bible through, which he confeſſed to me he had never done; at the ſame time lamenting, that he had ſo long neglected to peruſe, what he called the charter of his ſalvation.

tion

tion to the number of Johnſon's friends. To his villa at Streatham, in Surrey, Johnſon was invited, not as a gueſt, but as a reſiant, whenever he was diſpoſed to change the town for the country air: for his accommodation, an apartment was allotted; for his entertainment, a library was furniſhed with ſuch books as himſelf choſe, and little was wanting to perſuade him, that, when at Streatham, he was at home. He ſoon experienced the ſalutary effects of his new abode, and there is little doubt that to it he was indebted for ſome years of his life.

It might have been expected that Johnſon, in the eaſy circumſtances in which he had for ſome time felt himſelf, and with ſuch a love of independence as he affected, would have declined obligations that he was unable to repay, at leaſt in kind; but he knew that friendſhip weighs not in a balance the favours it confers. Mr. Thrale's tenders carried in them all the evidences of ſincerity, and he had the example of men, equally wiſe with himſelf, to juſtify his acceptance of ſuch invitations as were now made him *. The only obligation they ſubjected him to was,

* The inſtances of this kind, that occur in the lives of eminent men, to ſpeak of thoſe of this country only, are not few. Hobbes of Malmeſbury, paſſed many years of his life in philoſophical retirement at Chatſworth, in the family of the earl of Devonſhire; memorials whereof were formerly viſible in Latin verſes, written by him, with a diamond, on the windows of the houſe. Selden, at the counteſs of Kent's in White-friars, adjoining to the Temple. Mr. Locke was conſidered as one of the family of lady Maſham, at Oates in the county of Eſſex. She was a daughter of Dr. Ralph Cudworth, a woman of ſuch eminence for learning and piety, that

was, that of ſupporting his character, and, in a family where there were many viſitants, furniſhing ſuch converſation, as was to be expected from a man who had diſtinguiſhed himſelf by his learning, his wit, and his eloquence. This, it muſt be confeſſed, was a burdenſome taſk to one who, like others, muſt be ſuppoſed to have had his ſombrous intervals, and, in the hour of repletion, to wiſh for the indulgence of being ſilent, or, at leaſt, of talking like other men. To be continually uttering apophthegms, or ſpeeches worthy of remembrance, was more than could have been expected of Socrates †.

Beſides

the book intitled, 'The whole duty of man' was, for ſome time, believed to be of her writing; and laſtly, Dr. Iſaac Watts found a comfortable retreat from the cares of the world, in the family of Sir Thomas Abney, and his worthy deſcendants, at Newington in Middleſex. Johnſon's ſituation, in Mr. Thrale's family, was not ſo conſtant and uninterrupted as was that of the perſons above-mentioned in their ſeveral abodes; but, in reſpect of the liberties allowed him, and the kindneſs with which he was treated, the compariſon is no way to the diſadvantage of this his friend.

† What were Johnſon's ſentiments of a ſituation like this, may be gathered from the following note, which I meet with in his adverſaria, or collections for the Rambler, now in my poſſeſſion, and ſpoken of in a preceding page.

'Philomeidis invited to the houſe of Largus in the country, as 'a wit. Largus means to credit himſelf by his acquaintance— 'calls in the country to be entertained—they come, big with ex- 'pectation, full of awe. Silent, therefore, I ſilent—Diſappointed— 'Largus chagrined—Behaviour of boors before a wit—their eager- 'neſs, expectation, ſurpriſe, at any thing common. I near dull— 'Cleora, a lady dreaded for her elegance and knowledge, came 'by chance; I ſhone: I now am proud; nobody worth ſpeaking 'to. Inform them, Mr. Rambler, that no man can be a wit at 'pleaſure, or converſe wittily by himſelf.—I was at firſt invited

'to

Beſides the conveniences for ſtudy, with which he was furniſhed at Streatham, he had opportunities of exerciſe, and the pleaſure of airings and excurſions. He was once prevailed on by Mr. Thrale to join in

' to tables---my friend now goes without me---I reſtrain, not ' direct.

' Nothing ſo unfortunate as a wit by profeſſion, one who raiſes ex- ' pectation at his entry—always in debt—many pay with common ' places—others unwilling to part with what chance has brought ' them, ſpend their lives in ſtraining, or get at one place to retail ' in another. Wit depends upon a thouſand caſualties—an occaſion, ' combination of ideas, preſence of mind, time, accidental fit. ' That excel in wit will own it is very little in a man's power. ' That no man can appoint an hour in which he will be witty. ' The luckieſt thoughts ſuch as a man not led to by a regular train. ' The mind of a witty man the ſoil in which wit planted grows, but ' few cultivate. A man, many thoughts in walk, bed, which when ' he has his pen and paper he cannot recover. Folly of ſuffering ' reputation to depend on a repartee which often favours the dull. ' The firſt principle of wit out of our power. Scaliger's genius. ' The Engliſh—Miſery of writing without the vein then flowing. ' The happy have their days, and the unhappy, and the genius ' the happy, who has flows often and knows their value. The ' little power men have over their effuſions Genius made ancients ' attribute to impulſe.'

The hints here inſerted, were indubitably the rudiments of a paper, No. 101, in the Rambler, the concluding paragraph of which is in the following words: 'I believe, Mr. Rambler, that it ' has ſome time happened to others, who have the good or ill fortune ' to be celebrated for wits, to fall under the ſame cenſures upon the ' like occaſions. I hope, therefore, that you will prevent any miſ- ' repreſentations of ſuch failures, by remarking, that invention is ' not wholly at the command of its poſſeſſor; that the power of ' pleaſing is very often obſtructed by the deſire; that all expecta- ' tion leſſens ſurpriſe, yet, ſome ſurpriſe is neceſſary to gaiety; and ' that thoſe who deſire to partake of the pleaſure of wit, muſt con- ' tribute to its production, ſince the mind ſtagnates without external ' ventilation; and that effervescence of the fancy, which flaſhes into ' tranſport, can be raiſed only by the infuſion of diſſimilar ideas.'

the

the pleaſures of the chace, in which he ſhewed himſelf a bold rider, for he either leaped, or broke through, many of the hedges that obſtructed him. This he did, not becauſe he was eager in the purſuit, but, as he ſaid, to ſave the trouble of alighting and remounting. He did not derive the pleaſure or benefit from riding that many do: it had no tendency to raiſe his ſpirits; and he once told me that, in a journey on horſeback, he fell aſleep. In the exerciſe of a coach he had great delight; it afforded him the indulgence of indolent poſtures, and, as I diſcovered when I have had him in my own, the noiſe of it aſſiſted his hearing*.

It cannot be ſuppoſed but that theſe indulgences were a great relief to Johnſon in his declining years; they, nevertheleſs, indiſpoſed him for meditation and reflection; and, as he has noted in his diary, aſſigning for the reaſon the irregularity of the family, it broke his habit of early riſing, which he had perſiſted in from new-year's day 1765, to about the midſummer following †. It is poſſible that the family, had they been

* In Dr. Pope's With, I meet with the following note: 'I have 'known ſeveral who could hear but little in their chambers, but 'when they were in a coach rattling upon the ſtones heard very 'well. I alſo knew a lady in Eſſex, whoſe name was Tyrrel, 'who, while ſhe had occaſion to diſcourſe, uſed to beat a great 'drum, without which ſhe could not hear at all; the reaſon 'whereof is this; the moſt frequent cauſe of deafneſs is, the 'relaxation of the tympanum or drum of the ear, which, by this 'violent and continual agitation of the air, is extended, and 'made more tight and ſpringy, and better reflects ſounds, like a 'drum new braced.'

† 'March 3. I have never, I thank God, ſince new year's 'day, deviated from the practiſe of riſing.

'In

been diſpoſed to it, might with equal truth have complained, that he was little leſs irregular, and that, if they obliged him to break his reſolution of early riſing, he often prevented their retiring to reſt, at a ſeaſonable hour, that he might not want the gratification of tea.

About this time, Johnſon had the honour of a converſation with his majeſty, in the library, at the queen's houſe. Whether the occaſion of it was accidental, or otherwiſe, I have never been informed; but from this account of it, given by him, it afforded him great ſatisfaction. He ſpoke to me of the king's behaviour, in terms of the higheſt gratitude and approbation, and deſcribed it as equalling in grace and condeſcenſion what might have been expected from Lewis the fourteenth, when the manners of the French court were in the higheſt ſtate of cultivation. The public are already in poſſeſſion of the handſome compliment which his majeſty made him; I will, nevertheleſs, give it here a place: he aſked Johnſon, if he intended to give the world any more of his compoſitions; Johnſon anſwered, he believed he ſhould not, for that he thought he had written enough; 'I ſhould have 'thought ſo too,' replied his majeſty, 'if you had 'not written ſo well †.'

Johnſon

'In this practice I perſiſted till I went to Mr. Thrale's ſome 'time before midſummer: the irregularity of that family broke 'my habit of riſing. I was there till after Michaelmas.'

† Many ſayings of princes have been thought worthy of recording. I recollect one, of George the ſecond, which, for the elegance of it, deſerves to be remembered. In the rebellion in 1745, Mr. Thornton, a Yorkſhire gentleman, raiſed, at his own expence, a body of horſe, and, though but newly married to a beautiful

Johnſon was now approaching towards ſixty. He was an exact computer of time, and, as his eſſays abundantly ſhew, regretted deeply the lapſe of thoſe minutes that could not be recalled, and though, in his own judgment of himſelf, he had been criminal in the waſte of it, he was ever reſolving to ſubtract from his ſleep thoſe hours which are fitteſt for ſtudy and meditation. Numberleſs are the reſolutions that I meet with in his diaries, for a ſeries of years back, to riſe at eight; but he was unable, for any long continuance, to perform them, a weakneſs, leſs inexcuſable than he thought it, for he was ever a bad ſleeper, and was ſufficiently ſenſible of his infirmity, in that reſpect, to have allayed his ſcrupuloſity, had he not been a moſt rigorous judge of his actions. To impreſs the more ſtrongly on his mind the value of time, and the uſe it behoved every wiſe man to make of it, he indulged himſelf in an article of luxury, which, as far as my obſervation and remembrance will ſerve me, he never enjoyed till this late period of his life: it was a watch, which he cauſed to be made for him, in the year 1768, by thoſe eminent artiſts Mudge and Dutton: it was of metal, and the outer caſe covered with tortoiſe-ſhell; he paid for it ſeventeen guineas. On the dial-plate thereof, which

beautiful young woman, headed it, and joined the king's army. At the defeat at Culloden, he, with his wife, went to court, w e being ſeen by the king, who had noticed Mrs. Thornton, he thus accoſted by the monarch: 'Mr. Thornton, I have 'b d the vices you have rendered to your country, and ' r at to family, and have held myſelf ob- ' d you for bo but I was never able to eſtimate the degree ' i till now that I ſee the lady whom you left

was

was of enamel, he cauſed to be inſcribed, in the original Greek, theſe words of our bleſſed Saviour, Νυξ γαρ ερχεται*, but with the miſtake of a letter μ for ν: the meaning of them is, 'For the night cometh.' This, though a memento of great importance, he, about three years after, thought pedantic; he, therefore, exchanged the dial-plate for one in which the inſcription was omitted.

In the ſame year, 1768, upon the eſtabliſhment of the royal academy of painting, ſculpture, &c. Johnſon was nominated profeſſor of ancient literature, an office merely honorary, and conferred on him, as it is ſuppoſed, upon the recommendation of the preſident, Sir Joſhua Reynolds.

In the variety of ſubjects on which he had exerciſed his pen, Johnſon had hitherto forborne to meddle with the diſputes of contending factions, which is all, that, at this day, is to be underſtood by the word politics. He was ever a friend to government, in a general ſenſe of the term, as knowing what benefits ſociety derives from it; and was never tempted to write on the ſide of what is called oppoſition, but at a period of his life, when experience had not enabled him to judge of the motives which induce men to aſſume the characters of patriots. In the year 1769, he ſaw with indignation the methods which, in the buſineſs of Wilkes, were taken to work upon the populace, and, in 1770, publiſhed a pamphlet, intitled, 'The falſe alarm,' wherein he aſſerts, and labours to ſhew, by a variety of arguments founded on precedents, that the expulſion of a member of the houſe of

* John, chap. ix. v. 4.

commons, for ſuch offences as he had been convicted of, was both juſt and ſeaſonable, and that no ſuch calamity as the ſubverſion of the conſtitution, was to be feared from an act, that had uſage, which is the law of parliament, to warrant it. The non-acquieſcence of the people intereſted in the queſtion, is therefore branded by him with folly and madneſs, in the following animated expreſſions:—'Every artifice of 'ſedition has been ſince practiſed to awaken diſcon-'tent, and inflame indignation. The papers of every 'day have been filled with the exhortations and me-'naces of faction. The madneſs has ſpread through 'all ranks and both ſexes; women and children have 'clamoured for Mr. Wilkes: honeſt ſimplicity has 'been cheated into fury, and only the wiſe have eſ-'caped the infection.'

To ridicule the conduct of oppoſition, he adopts a term, invented by the leaders thereof, and calls the conjuncture of events, at the time of which he is ſpeaking, an *alarming criſis*, but endeavours to abate the fears of its termination, by alluding to parliamentary deciſions apparently partial, and ſometimes oppreſſive; and ſhewing, that the vexation excited by injuſtice, ſuffered, or ſuppoſed to be ſuffered, by any private man or ſingle community, was local and temporary. This poſition he illuſtrates by the following obſervation: 'We have found by experience, that 'though a ſquire has given ale and veniſon in vain, 'and a borough has been compelled to ſee its deareſt 'intereſts in the hands of him whom it did not truſt, 'yet the general ſtate of the nation has continued the 'ſame. The ſun has riſen, and the corn has grown, 'whatever talk has been of the danger of pro-'perty.

'perty, yet he that ploughed the field commonly 'reaped it, and he that built the houſe was maſter of 'the door.'

In a tone more grave, he addreſſes ſuch as are capable of conviction, and tells them—that 'they have 'as much happineſs as the condition of life will eaſily 'receive; and that a government, of which an erro-'neous, or unjuſt, repreſentation of one county only, 'is the greateſt crime that intereſt can diſcover, or 'malice can upbraid, is a government approaching 'nearer to perfection than any that experience has 'ſhewn, or hiſtory related.'

The pamphlet concludes with ſome ſhrewd remarks on the ſupport given to faction by the ſectaries, and that frigid neutrality of the tories in this buſineſs, which he cenſures in theſe words: 'They do not yet conſider that they have at laſt a 'king, who knows not the name of a party, and 'who wiſhes to be the common father of his 'people.'

It was not to be imagined, that a publication, ſo unpopular as this, would long remain unanſwered. Of many anſwers to it, one alone ſeemed to Johnſon worthy of a reply; but, in a conſultation with his friends, he was adviſed to forbear. Had he engaged in a vindication of 'The falſe alarm,' the world might poſſibly have been entertained with a ſpecimen of his abilities in controverſial writing, in which there is little doubt that he would have diſplayed the temper and perſpicuity of Hooker, the ſtrength of Chillingworth, and the dexterity of Hoadly, though, in truth, he was no friend to controverſy; his

his opinion on that ſubject being, that it ſeldom produced conviction, that an impotent argument againſt a book was beſt refuted by ſilence, and that it is want of policy to give immortality to that which muſt of itſelf expire.

In the next ſucceeding year, a ſubject of more general importance to the intereſts of this country engaged his attention: it was a queſtion between us and the court of Spain, touching the pre-diſcovery, and, conſequently, the right of dominion over certain iſlands in the South ſeas, known to us by the name of Pepys's or Falkland's iſlands, and to the Spaniards by that of the Malouines, ſpots of earth ſo inconſiderable, as Johnſon aſſerts, that in the deſert of the ocean they had almoſt eſcaped human notice; and which, if they had not happened to make a ſea-mark, had perhaps never had a name. Lord Anſon, in his voyage, had noticed theſe iſlands, and the relator thereof had recommended them as neceſſary to the ſucceſs of any future expedition againſt the coaſt of Chili, and, of ſuch importance, that the poſſeſſion of them would produce many advantages in peace; and in war would make us maſters of the South ſea. In 1748, our miniſtry ſent out a few ſloops, for a fuller knowledge of Pepys's and Falkland's iſlands, and for further diſcoveries in the South ſea; but, upon a remonſtrance of Wall, the Spaniſh ambaſſador here, maintaining the right of his maſter to the excluſive dominion of the South ſea, they relinquiſhed part of their original deſign, and our purpoſe of ſettling there was diſowned. Thus the matter reſted, till lord Egmont was appointed to the direction

direction of our naval operations, who, in the year 1765, ſent out an expedition, the commander whereof took poſſeſſion of Falkland's iſland in the name of his Britannic majeſty, and placed a garriſon in a place of defence, to which he gave the appellation of Port Egmont. In this ſettlement, we were ſoon after diſturbed; for Madariaga, a Spaniſh commodore, with five frigates and a train of artillery, appearing before the iſland, obliged our people to capitulate, and obtained poſſeſſion. This event was no ſooner known at our court, than hoſtilities againſt Spain were reſolved on, and a powerful fleet was aſſembled: theſe preparations brought on a conference between prince Maſſerano, the Spaniſh ambaſſador here, and our miniſter, and a ſubſequent negociation at Madrid, between Mr. Harris our miniſter there, and the marquis Grimaldi: the reſult was, a diſavowal on the part of Spain of the violent enterpriſe of Buccarelli, the governor of Buenos Ayres, who had ſent the force that diſpoſſeſſed the Engliſh, and a promiſe to reſtore the port and fort called Egmont, with all the artillery and ſtores therein, but with a declaration, that this engagement ſhould not affect the queſtion of the prior right of ſovereignty of the Malouine, otherwiſe called Falkland's iſlands*.

The

* The conference at London was with lord Rochford, then ſecretary of ſtate for the ſouthern department, who, in diſcourſe with me, gave an account of it to this effect, viz. that he repreſented to the Spaniſh ambaſſador, that the inflexibility of his court in this buſineſs had compelled us to arm, that our fleet was manned, and the officers and ſailors impatient for action; that the nation having incurred the expence of a naval equipment, would hardly be ſatisfied without a trial of what it was able to

The acquieſcence of our court in theſe conceſſions of that of Madrid, and the reference of a diſputable queſtion to the Greek calends, furniſhed the leaders of faction with a new topic for clamour, and war became the cry. The heavy burthen of debt, incurred by the laſt, was no reaſon againſt a new one, and millions were to be expended, and thouſands murdered, for the titular ſovereignty of an iſland, which Johnſon thus ſtrongly and even poetically characteriſes:——

'A bleak and gloomy ſolitude, an iſland thrown 'aſide from human uſe, ſtormy in winter, and barren 'in ſummer: an iſland which not the ſouthern ſava-'ges have dignified with habitation; where a garriſon 'muſt be kept in a ſtate that contemplates with envy 'the exiles of Siberia; of which the expence will be 'perpetual, and the uſe only occaſional, and which, 'if fortune ſmile upon our labours, may become a 'neſt of ſmugglers in peace, and in war the future 'refuge of buccaniers.'

Theſe are his ſentiments reſpecting the incommodities of this conteſted ſettlement: againſt the advantages ſuggeſted by the relator of Anſon's expedition, whom he repreſents as having written under the influence of a heated imagination, he oppoſes the following arguments, founded in true policy and ſound morality:

'That ſuch a ſettlement may be of uſe in war, no 'man that conſiders its ſituation will deny. But war 'is not the whole buſineſs of life; it happens but

effect; and that a refuſal of conceſſions on the part of Spain would inevitably bring on a war between the two powers, which, as it would be confined to the ſea, muſt prove a ſhort one.

'ſeldom,

'ſeldom, and every man, either good or wiſe, wiſhes 'that its frequency were ſtill leſs. That conduct 'which betrays deſigns of future hoſtility, if it does 'not excite violence, will always generate malignity; 'it muſt for ever exclude confidence and friendſhip, 'and continue a cold and ſluggiſh rivalry, by a ſly 'reciprocation of indirect injuries, without the bra-'very of war, or the ſecurity of peace.

'The advantage of ſuch a ſettlement in time of 'peace is, I think, not eaſily to be proved. For, 'what uſe can it have but of a ſtation for contra-'band traders, a nurſery of fraud, and a receptacle 'of theft? Narborough, about a century ago, was of 'opinion, that no advantages could be obtained in voy-'ages to the South ſea, except by ſuch an armament 'as, with a ſailor's morality, *might trade by force.* It 'is well known, that the prohibitions of commerce 'are, in theſe countries, to the laſt degree, rigorous, 'and that no man, not authorized by the king of 'Spain, can trade there but by force or ſtealth. 'Whatever profit is obtained, muſt be gained by 'the violence of rapine, or dexterity of fraud.

'Government will not, perhaps, ſoon arrive at ſuch 'purity and excellence, but that ſome connivance at 'leaſt will be indulged to the triumphant robber and 'ſucceſsful cheat. He that brings wealth home, is 'ſeldom interrogated by what means it was obtained. 'This, however, is one of thoſe modes of corruption 'with which mankind ought always to ſtruggle, and 'which they may, in time, hope to overcome. There 'is reaſon to expect, that as the world is more en-'lightened, policy and morality will at laſt be recon-

'ciled, and that nations will learn not to do what 'they would not ſuffer.

'But the ſilent toleration of ſuſpected guilt is a 'degree of depravity far below that which openly in- 'cites and manifeſtly protects it. To pardon a pi- 'rate may be injurious to mankind; but how much 'greater is the crime of opening a port in which all 'pirates will be ſafe? The contraband trader is not 'more worthy of protection: if, with Narborough, he 'trades by force, he is a pirate; if he trades ſecretly, 'he is only a thief. Thoſe who honeſtly refuſe his 'traffic, he hates as obſtructors of his profit; and 'thoſe with whom he deals he cheats, becauſe he 'knows that they dare not complain. He lives with a 'heart full of that malignity, which fear of detection 'always generates in thoſe who are to defend unjuſt 'acquiſitions againſt lawful authority; and when he 'comes home with riches thus acquired, he brings a 'mind hardened in evil, too proud for reproof, and 'too ſtupid for reflection; he offends the high by 'his inſolence, and corrupts the low by his ex- 'ample.'

To ſilence this clamour, to defeat the purpoſes of a wicked and malevolent faction, to allay the thirſt for human blood, and to bring the deluded people to a ſenſe of their true intereſt, was the aim of Johnſon in writing this moſt judicious pamphlet: he ſucceeded in his endeavour, the miſeries of war were averted, the contractors diſappointed, and a few months reſtored the populace to the uſe of their underſtandings.

In a review of the ſeveral particulars herein before related, it will appear, that Johnſon's courſe of life

was

was very uniform. London was a place of reſidence which he preferred to all others, as affording more intelligence, and better opportunities of converſation than were elſewhere to be found, and he was but little delighted either with rural ſcenes or manners. Novelty, and variety of occupations, it is true, were objects that engaged his attention, and from theſe he never failed to extract information. Though born and bred in a city, he well underſtood both the theory and practice of agriculture, and even the management of a farm: he could deſcribe, with great accuracy, the proceſs of malting; and, had neceſſity driven him to it, could have thatched a dwelling. Of field recreations, ſuch as hunting, ſetting, and ſhooting, he would diſcourſe like a ſportſman, though his perſonal defects rendered him, in a great meaſure, incapable of deriving pleaſure from any ſuch exerciſes.

But he had taken a very comprehenſive view of human life and manners, and, that he was well acquainted with the views and purſuits of all claſſes and characters of men, his writings abundantly ſhew. This kind of knowledge he was ever deſirous of increaſing, even as he advanced in years: to gratify it, he was acceſſible to all comers, and yielded to the invitations of ſuch of his friends as had reſidences in the country, to vary his courſe of living, and paſs the pleaſanter months of the year in the ſhades of obſcurity.

In theſe viſits, where there were children in the family, he took great delight in examining them as to their progreſs in learning, or, to make uſe of a

term almoſt obſolete, of appoſing them*. To this purpoſe, I once heard him ſay, that in a viſit to Mrs. Percy, who had the care of one of the young princes, at the queen's houſe, the prince of Wales, being then a child, came into the room, and began to play about; when Johnſon, with his uſual curioſity, took an opportunity of aſking him what books he was reading, and, in particular, enquired as to his knowledge of the Scriptures: the prince, in his anſwers, gave him great ſatisfaction; and, as to the laſt, ſaid, that part of his daily exerciſes was to read Oſtervald. In many families into which he went, the fathers were often deſirous of producing their ſons to him for his opinion of their parts, and of the proficiency they had

* To appoſe ſignifies to put queſtions. Ingulphus, abbot of Croyland, who was educated in the old ſchool of the abbey of Weſtminſter, relates, that he was frequently examined in this manner by Editha the wife of Edward the confeſſor:—'Vidi ego illam 'multoties, cum patrem meum in regis curia morantem adhuc 'puer inviſerem, et ſæpius mihi de ſcholis venienti de literis ac 'verſu meo apponebat, cum occurrerem, et libentiſſime de gram-'matica ſoliditate ad logicam levitatem, qua callebat, declinans, 'cum argumentorum ſubtili ligamine me concluſiſſet, ſemper 'tribus aut quatuor nummis per ancillulam numeratis ad regium 'penu tranſmiſit, et refectum dimiſit.'——Ingulphi hiſtoria, inter ſcriptores poſt Bedam, edit. Lond. 1596, p. 509. a.

Which paſſage, Stow in his annals, has thus rendered:

'I have ſeen her (ſaith Ingulphus) then, when being yet but a 'boy, I came to ſee my father dwelling in the king's court. And 'often coming from ſchool, when I met her, ſhe would appoſe me 'touching my learning and leſſon, and falling from grammar to 'logicke, wherein ſhe had ſome knowledge, would ſubtilly con-'clude an argument with me, and by a hand-maiden give three or 'foure peeces of money, and ſend me unto the place where I 'ſhould receive ſome victuals, and ſo be diſmiſſed.'

made

made at ſchool, which, in frequent inſtances, came out to be but ſmall. He once told me, that being at the houſe of a friend, whoſe ſon in his ſchool-vacation was come home, the father ſpoke of this child as a lad of pregnant parts, and ſaid, that he was well verſed in the claſſics, and acquainted with hiſtory, in the ſtudy whereof he took great delight. Having this information, Johnſon, as a teſt of the young ſcholar's attainments, put this queſtion to him:——'At what 'time did the heathen oracles ceaſe?'——The boy, not in the leaſt daunted, anſwered:——'At the diſſo-'lution of religious houſes.'

By the exerciſe of ſuch offices as theſe; by his diſpoſition to encourage children in their learning, and joining admonition to inſtruction, to exhort them to obedience to their parents and teachers, Johnſon rendered himſelf a welcome gueſt in all the families into which he was admitted, and, in various ways, did he employ his talents in the gratification of his friends. A gentleman, with whom he had maintained a long and ſtrict friendſhip, had the misfortune to loſe his wife, and wiſhed Johnſon, from the outlines of her character, which he ſhould give him, and his own knowledge of her worth, to compoſe a monumental inſcription for her: he returned the huſband thanks for the confidence he placed in him, and acquitted himſelf of the taſk in the following fine eulogium, now to be ſeen in the pariſh church of Watford in Hertfordſhire:

In the vault below are depoſited the remains of
JANE BELL, wife of JOHN BELL, Eſq;
who, in the fifty-third year of her age,
ſurrounded with many worldly bleſſings,
heard, with fortitude and compoſure truly great,
the horrible malady, which had for ſome time begun to afflict her,
pronounced incurable;
and for more than three years,
endured with patience and concealed with decency,
the daily tortures of gradual death;
continued to divide the hours not allotted to devotion,
between the cares of her family, and the converſe of her friends;
rewarded the attendance of duty,
and acknowledged the offices of affection;
and while ſhe endeavoured to alleviate by chearfulneſs,
her huſband's ſufferings and ſorrows,
increaſed them by her gratitude for his care,
and her ſolicitude for his quiet.

To the memory of theſe virtues,
more highly honoured as more familiarly known,
this monument is erected by
JOHN BELL*.

He had long been ſolicited by Mr. James Boſwell, a native of Scotland, and one that highly valued him, to accompany him in a journey to the Hebrides, or Weſtern iſlands of that kingdom, as to a part of the world in which nature was to be viewed in her rudeſt and moſt terrific form; and where, whatever was

* She died in the month of October, 1771.

wanting

wanting to delight the eye, or ſoothe the imagination, was made up by objects that could not fail to expand it, and turn delight into aſtoniſhment; and being now, in the year 1773, his own maſter, having no literary engagement to fulfil, he accepted the invitation. He began the tour propoſed, in the autumn of the year above-mentioned, and, computing from the eighteenth day of Auguſt, when he left Edinburgh, to the ninth of November, when he returned thither, completed it in ſeven weeks and ſix days; and, at his return to England, drew up and publiſhed an account of it.

The Weſtern iſlands of Scotland are called by the ancient geographers, the Ebudæ and Hebrides. The Scotch hiſtorians, namely, Hector Boethius, biſhop Leſly, Buchanan, and Johnſon, have given us little more concerning them than their names. Camden has given a general, but brief deſcription of them, and ſpeaks of their number as about forty-four; but biſhop Gibſon adds, that they have been reckoned at three hundred, in which computation every ſpot or iſlet muſt be ſuppoſed to be included: but a particular deſcription of the Weſtern iſlands was wanting to the world till the year 1703, when a perſon of the name of Martin, publiſhed a book with that title, containing a full account of thoſe iſlands, and of the government, religion, and cuſtoms of the inhabitants thereof; and alſo, 'of the ſecond ſight or faculty of 'fore-ſeeing things by viſion, ſo common among 'them.'

Of this writer little more is known, than that of which himſelf ſeems to be the relator, viz. that he was born in one of the moſt *ſpacious* and *fertile* iſles

in

in the weſt of Scotland; and, beſides his liberal education at the univerſity, had the advantage of ſeeing foreign places, and converſing with ſome of the royal ſociety; but who, nevertheleſs, ſeems to have been a very weak, credulous, and ſuperſtitious man, and, notwithſtanding his liberal education, with reſpect both to matter and form, an injudicious writer. The ſame perſon had a few years before made a voyage to St. Kilda, the moſt remote of the Weſtern iſlands, and, in 1698, publiſhed a deſcription thereof.

The defects of Martin, in the accounts given by him of the Hebrides, and the inhabitants of the ſeveral iſles ſo called, are amply ſupplied by a late traveller thither, Mr. Pennant, who, in the years 1769 and 1772 made the tour of Scotland, and, with a curious and penetrating eye remarked all that ſeems to have been worthy of notice, reſpecting either the ſituation of the ſpots by him deſcribed, or the people whom neceſſity has doomed, or particular circumſtances have led, to become dwellers there.

The extent of theſe iſlands, from north to ſouth, is computed at two hundred miles, and their medium width ſuch as, were they one continent, would make a country as large as Scotland. Of the inhabitants, thoſe of St. Kilda for inſtance, ſome are Chriſtians, reſembling, both in their religious tenets and the purity of their lives, thoſe of the primitive times; others are of the Romiſh communion, and the reſt are of that denomination of proteſtants, who adhere to the reformation of that furious bigot John Knox. The civil conſtitution of theſe ſeveral tracts of land, for countries they are not to be called, is uniform:

it

it is feudatory, and of this the many caſtles and places of defence, every where viſible among them, in which their lords and chieftains reſide, are evident proofs. In extent of land they differ greatly: Sky, the largeſt of them, is above ſixty meaſured miles long; but, the greater number of them are leſs than four miles in length, and two in breadth. Iona, or Icolmkill, is but two miles long and one broad, yet, it was once an epiſcopal ſeat, and had on it a cathedral and a place of ſepulture, in which no fewer than forty-eight Scottiſh, eight Norwegian, and four Iriſh kings, are interred; and alſo, two monaſtic eſtabliſhments, the one for men, the other for women: the ruins of theſe edifices are yet remaining, and may be ſeen, accurately delineated, in Mr. Pennant's 'Tour 'in Scotland, and Voyage to the Hebrides,' made in 1772, and publiſhed in 1774. Others of theſe iſles are yet ſmaller: Cannay is three miles by one, and Staffa is a mile long, and half a mile broad, and has but one houſe.

The ſituation of theſe iſlands, in the boſom of the deep, expoſed to howling winds, and beating waves that excavate their very foundations, and rains whoſe intermiſſion is little more than caſual, together with the inconveniences of an exciſion from the continent, is a circumſtance ſo much againſt them, as to deprive the inhabitants of many of the greateſt ſocial comforts, and the poſſibility of ſubſiſting under the want of them is hardly conceivable. It is true, that in ſome of the iſlands, neareſt the continent, the neceſſaries, and ſome of the luxuries, of life are attainable, by a communication with the neareſt ſhore; but extreme indigence is the lot of all the iſlanders, excepting their chieftains

chieftains, and the proprietors of land held in feudal ſubjection immediately under them. In the ſubordinate ranks, the condition of the people is ſo forlorn and deſtitute, that, were it not that they are as virtuous and innocent as they are poor, they muſt be deemed the moſt wretched inhabitants of the earth *.

The

* Martin, a writer, that in mere matters of fact may be truſted, in his voyage to St. Kilda relates a variety of particulars reſpecting that iſland and the inhabitants thereof. Of the iſland he ſays, that it is two miles long, one broad, and five in circumference, and is one hard rock, with earth from ſix inches to three foot deep; but with not a tree, nor even a ſhrub thereon. Of the inhabitants, and their manner of living, he gives a deſcription, which, being abridged, has furniſhed the following account. They are computed at about one hundred and eighty: they obſerve the chriſtian Sabbath, and believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, and have three chapels covered with thatch, and in one of them a brazen crucifix, on which they ſwear, and contract matrimony: they ſpeak the Erſe language, are charitable to each other, and ſhew great humanity to ſhipwrecked ſtrangers. The head of the Mac-Leod family is the proprietor of the iſland, who governs it by his ſteward. Though they have ſheep and a few oxen, their chief food is Solan geeſe and their eggs, both which they come at by climbing the rocks at the peril of their lives: to take them they are ſuſpended from the precipices by ropes of an immenſe length, covered with ſalted cow-hides, of which there are only three on the iſland, which are the joint property of all the dwellers thereon. When they climb the rocks, it is with their elbows, their backs being to the rock. The dreſs of the women is partly linen, and partly plaid: they wear ſhoes only in winter, and thoſe the ſkins of the neck of the Solan gooſe; that part which covers the head of the fowl ſerving for the heel. Their bread is made of barley or oats, and their drink water or whey. They have only one ſteel and tinder-box on the whole iſland, and that is private property. The women are beautiful and innocent, and the inhabitants in general courteous: their ordinary form of ſalutation, 'God ſave you.' In common with the people of the northern

The circumſtances of diſcrimination between theſe people and the reſt of mankind, are ſo many, and their characters, by conſequence, ſo different, their manners and cuſtoms ſo ſingular, and their mode of life ſo inconſiſtent with all that can be conceived, even in the loweſt degree of civilization, that we are not to ſeek for

northern regions, they have a vein of poetry, that is to ſay, a faculty in rhyming, and are lovers of muſic and dancing, but know no inſtrument ſave the jews' harp.

The ſame author, in his latter publication, 'The deſcription of 'the Weſtern iſles,' gives a pleaſant account of an inhabitant of St. Kilda, who, being prevailed on to accompany ſome traders to Glaſgow, was aſtoniſhed at the length of the voyage, and the proſpect of that city. His relation is as follows:

'Upon his arrival at Glaſgow, he was like one that had dropped 'from the clouds into a new world, whoſe language, habit, &c. 'were, in all reſpects, new to him: he never imagined that ſuch 'big houſes of ſtone were made with hands; and, for the pave-'ments of the ſtreets, he thought it muſt needs be altogether na-'tural; for he could not believe that men would be at the pains 'to beat ſtones into the ground to walk upon. He ſtood dumb at 'the door of his lodging with the greateſt admiration; and, when 'he ſaw a coach and two horſes, he thought it to be a little houſe 'they were drawing at their tail with men in it; but he condemned 'the coachman for a fool to ſit ſo uneaſy, for he thought it ſafer 'to ſit on the horſe's back. The mechaniſm of the coach-wheel, 'and its running about, was the greateſt of all his wonders.

'When he went through the ſtreets, he deſired to have one to 'lead him by the hand. Thomas Roſs a merchant, and others, 'that took the diverſion to carry him through the town, aſked his 'opinion of the high church. He anſwered, that it was a large 'rock, yet, there were ſome in St. Kilda much higher, but that 'theſe were the beſt caves he ever ſaw; for that was the idea 'which he conceived of the pillars and arches upon which the 'church ſtands, When they carried him into the church, he was 'yet more ſurpriſed, and held up his hands with admiration, 'wondering how it was poſſible for men to build ſuch a prodigious

'fabric,

for the motives which, at different times, have induced travellers to viſit them.

The iſlands which Johnſon and his friend ſaw, though few in compariſon with the whole number,

'fabric, which he ſuppoſed to be the largeſt in the univerſe. He 'could not imagine what the pews were deſigned for, and he 'fancied the people that wore maſks, (not knowing whether they 'were men or women) had been guilty of ſome ill thing, for 'which they dared not ſhew their faces. He was amazed at 'women's wearing patches, and fancied them to have been bliſ-'ters. Pendants ſeemed to him the moſt ridiculous of all things: 'he condemned perriwigs mightily, and much more the powder 'uſed in them: in fine, he condemned all things as ſuperfluous he 'ſaw not in his own country. He looked with amazement on 'every thing that was new to him. When he heard the church 'bells ring, he was under a mighty conſternation, as if the fabric 'of the world had been in great diſorder. He did not think 'there had been ſo many people in the world as in the city of 'Glaſgow; and it was a great myſtery to him to think what they 'could all deſign by living ſo many in one place. He wondered 'how they could all be furniſhed with proviſion; and when he 'ſaw big loaves, he could not tell whether they were bread, 'ſtone, or wood. He was amazed to think how they could be 'provided with ale, for he never ſaw any there that drank water. 'He wondered how they made them fine cloaths; and to ſee 'ſtockings made without being firſt cut, and afterwards ſewn, was 'no ſmall wonder to him. He thought it fooliſh in women to 'wear thin ſilks, as being a very improper habit for ſuch as pre-'tended to any ſort of employment. When he ſaw the women's' feet, he judged them to be of another ſhape than thoſe of the 'men, becauſe of the different ſhape of their ſhoes. He did not 'approve of the heels of ſhoes worn by men or women; and, 'when he obſerved horſes with ſhoes on their feet, and faſtened 'with iron nails, he could not forbear laughing, and thought it 'the moſt ridiculous thing that ever fell under his obſervation. 'He longed to ſee his native country again, and paſſionately 'wiſhed it were bleſſed with ale, brandy, tobacco and iron, as 'Glaſgow was.'

were

were ſome of the moſt conſiderable of the Hebrides; and his manner of deſcribing them and the inhabitants, as alſo, his reception, is entertaining; but it is not enough particular to render it intelligible to a ſtranger. In the relation of hiſtorical facts, and local circumſtances, Johnſon delighted not: whatever intelligence came in his way, furniſhed him with matter for reflection, and his book is rather a diſquiſition on Hebridian manners, than ſuch a deſcription of the iſlands and the people as it was in his power to give.

As an inſtance of Johnſon's inattention to hiſtorical facts, let me mention his account of Icolmkill *, called alſo Iona, which, though introduced by a ſentiment that is admired for its piety and pathos of expreſſion, is ſo abrupt, as to diſpleaſe. He calls it that illuſtrious iſland which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence ſavage clans and roving barbarians derived the benefits of knowledge, and the bleſſings of religion; but who can read thus much, concerning a ſpot ſo dignified, without wiſhing, that the author had mentioned a few of thoſe hiſtorical particulars, on which his reflections are founded? He might have told us from Bede, that the iſland takes its name from Columb, an abbot, who, about

* Martin ſays, that the word *Kill* in the Iriſh or Erſe language ſignifies a church; if then we reject the prepoſition *I*, and call it Columkill, we ſeem to have an intelligible name for it, i. e. Columb's church iſland. He farther relates, that the churches and the monaſtery were, by the kings of Scotland, endowed with revenues to the amount of 4000 marks a year. But, whoever wiſhes for ſatisfaction in this, and many other particulars reſpecting this iſland, will receive it in the peruſal of Mr. Pennant's Voyage to the Hebrides.

the year 565, came from Ireland, and preached the Goſpel to the northern Picts, and was called the apoſtle of the Picts, and that Melichen their king, being converted to the faith of Chriſt, gave the abbot the iſle of Iona, by Bede called Hy or Hu, who built two churches thereon, in one whereof he is interred, and alſo a monaſtery.

Bede flouriſhed about 734, and may be ſaid to ſpeak from recent authority. Biſhop Gibſon has recogniſed his account, and adds, that in a little village here, or hereabout, named Sodor, or, as others call it, Soa, a biſhop's ſee was erected, from which all the adjacent iſles, including Iona, took the name of Sodorenſes: the juriſdiction thereof, he elſewhere ſays, was given to the biſhop of the iſle of Man, and hence ariſes the compound appellative, biſhop of Sodor and Man. In the firſt of theſe particulars, he, however, ſtands corrected in a relation cited by Mr. Pennant, and founded on good authority, purporting, that during the time that the Norwegians were in poſſeſſion of the iſles, they divided them into two parts; the northern, which comprehended all that lay to the north of a certain promontory, and were, therefore, called the Norderys; and the ſouthern, which were thoſe that lay to the ſouth thereof, and were, for a ſimilar reaſon, called the Suderys. Voyage to the Hebrides, 257.

I have ſome reaſon to think that, in writing the account of his journey to the Weſtern iſlands, Johnſon had in his eye one of the moſt delightful books of the like kind in our language, 'Maundrell's journey 'from Aleppo to Jeruſalem.' The motives that induced him to undertake a labour ſo formidable to a man

man of his age, as his tour muſt be thought, I will not enquire into: doubtleſs, curioſity was one of them; but, it was curioſity directed to no peculiar object. He was neither an antiquary nor a naturaliſt; he had little acquaintance with the treaſures which lie below the ſurface of the earth; and for the ſtudy of botany he never diſcovered the leaſt reliſh. If any particular ſubject may be ſaid to have engaged his attention, it muſt have been the manners of a people of whom he knew little but by report, the knowledge whereof might furniſh him with new topics for reflection and diſquiſition, an exerciſe of his mental powers which, of all others, he moſt delighted in. That in this employment he has conducted himſelf with that impartiality which becomes a lover of truth, the natives of the kingdom he viſited deny; and, that he carried out of this country the temper of a man who hoped for an hoſpitable reception among ſtrangers, few are ſo hardy as to aſſert. Accordingly, we find in his narrative an intermixture, not only of praiſe and blame, but of gratitude and invective.

The volume which this tour gave birth to may properly be called a diſſertation, for it has ſcarcely any facts, and conſiſts chiefly in propoſitions which he hunts down, and enlivens with amuſing diſquiſition. As he ſays himſelf, on another occaſion, the negative catalogue of particulars is very copious: what he did not ſee, what he could not learn, what he would not believe, what he did not enquire about, and what he is not ſure of, altogether form a conſiderable enumeration. Yet the merit of this tract is great; for, though I will admit that no one going his route could derive from him direction or intelligence; though no remembrance

could be refreſhed, nor remarks corroborated; becauſe his web was ſpun, not from objects that preſented themſelves to his view, but from his own preexiſtent ideas; I am convinced, that every body muſt have regretted the omiſſion, had he, for any reaſon, withheld ſo entertaining a ſeries of reflections.

A reference to the work will diſcover both the cauſe and effect of the confined obſervation that muſt be remarked in it: he profeſſes his views to be directed to life and manners: of the former, if taken in its general ſenſe, he could obtain a very inadequate knowledge who was entertained by the opulent, at the beſt houſes, with the beſt fare of the country, and who, while he ſuffered no inconvenience within doors, enquired after little without; and, of the latter he could gain little information, for the manners he moſt cloſely obſerved were imported from the places where ſouthern elegance is taught. His known love of eaſe precluded him from intelligence: all deficiencies by which he could ſuffer, the natural hoſpitality of thoſe to whom he was a gueſt, temporarily ſupplied or concealed, and happy was it for him that he found not the ſame prejudices that he carried with him.

In all Johnſon's diſquiſitions, whether argumentative critical, there is a certain even-handed juſtice that es the mind in a ſtrange perplexity. When he ks of the paucity of trees in Scotland, his indig- ſeems excited at the ſupineneſs it manifeſted.] s—'to drop a ſeed into the ground can coſt ' thing, and the trouble is not great of protecting ' t young plant till it is out of danger.'——In this reader willingly acquieſces, and wonders, with Johnſon,

Johnſon, that plantation is neglected, till he is told in the concluſion of the paragraph, that it muſt be allowed difficult, where there is neither wood for paliſades, nor thorns for hedges. He again, in a ſubſequent page, reſumes the ſame kind of ſatirical admiration, which he balances by obſerving, that the land which covers future foreſts cannot be arable. This alſo is ſatisfactory: the queſtion of firſt importance certainly is—Where ſhall *corn* grow?—no one will deny, that food muſt be ſecured, before the delights of foliage, or the emoluments of timber are thought of. But all our wonder and regret at national inactivity, is diſſipated, when we are told, that Sir James Macdonald had made an experiment by planting ſeveral millions of trees, which the want of fences to keep the cattle off, had rendered abortive. Thus it is that he frequently raiſes an edifice, which appears founded and ſupported to reſiſt any attack; and then, with the next ſtroke, annihilates it, and leaves the vacuity he found.

With reſpect to the inaccuracy he has been charged with, it muſt, in juſtice, be imputed to the defect of his perceptions: he neither ſaw nor heard clearly; and, though this might be urged againſt his attempting to relate what he had met with or been told, it muſt be admitted in excuſe for any miſ-repreſentation; ſince no one could acquire credit by doubting the uniform veracity of Johnſon. He candidly confeſſes his inability, whenever he ſuſpected it; and owns, that his thoughts are the thoughts of one who has ſeen little.

I wiſh I could as readily apologize for the manner in which he ſpeaks of the people of that part of Scot-

land he viſited. He ſeems to think a barren ſoil diſgraceful to the proprietors; and his averſion is moſt excited, where he finds the comforts of life moſt ſparingly beſtowed: where he meets with refinement, he is placid, and is unwilling to depart from elegance; but, when he is diſpleaſed, or unſatisfied, he expreſſes himſelf with a keenneſs of ſatire, which, however it may delight by its poignancy, is not to be juſtified; and I have reaſon to think very highly, not only of the kindneſs which conſulted his humour, but of that temper and forbearance which reſtrained thoſe perſons who, while they were endeavouring to gratify him, received indubitable proof of his antipathy to their country.

But it is due to him to take notice, that in civility he has preſerved the ſame equilibrium as in argument. If he has ſtigmatized Scotland as a country, and the Scots as a people, his compliments to individuals, in ſome meaſure atone for it: they are judicious, elegant, and well conceived, and expreſs the ſenſe of gratitude proportioned to the favours he experienced.

I will not repeat, for I do not wiſh to perpetuate, thoſe paſſages that have given diſguſt. I have ever eſteemed the Scots as a brave, uſeful, and virtuous people, and ſhould be very ſorry if they imagined Johnſon's prejudices common to their ſouthern neighbours. If, in his journey acroſs their continent, he had remembered, that a very commendable and well-directed ſpirit of literary induſtry had diſtinguiſhed them, and, when among the Hebridians, that a perpetual ſtruggle againſt difficulties, and a patient toleration of irremediable evils, is eminently

laudable, I am perſuaded he would have written with leſs aſperity, and that his remarks would not have given that offence which I cannot but own well founded.

It is no leſs to be lamented, that he left not behind him thoſe prejudices againſt the eccleſiaſtical eſtabliſhment of Scotland and the religious perſuaſion of the people, which, though in England they gave little offence, could not, in that kingdom, be indulged without the ſuſpicion of bigotry. It is pretty well agreed that, between the church of England and that of Scotland, the queſtions in diſpute relate not to doctrines, but to diſcipline, which, in the judgment of many ſober perſons, is numbered among things indifferent. Being in a country of which Chriſtianity, in its utmoſt purity, is the religion, it might have been expected, that Johnſon, with a true catholic ſpirit, and as a teſtimony of reſpect for their teachers, would occaſionally have been preſent at divine ſervice in their churches; but his narrative contains not the leaſt hint of any ſuch compliance, though he has noted his joining in public worſhip at the Engliſh non-juring epiſcopal chapel at Aberdeen *.

From a tour to which he had no ſtronger an incentive, from which he was ſo little able to extract pleaſure, and which had occaſioned a ſuſpenſion of the enjoyments he found in a metropolis, it ſeems at firſt wonderful, that he ſhould have returned ſatisfied:

* For this condeſcenſion he would have had the example of Mr. Richard Baxter, a man whom he profeſſed to admire, who, as I have been credibly informed, to teſtify his charity towards thoſe from whom he diſſented in opinion, was wont, once in every year, to communicate with the eſtabliſhed church.

that he did ſo is certain; and it muſt be attributed to the gratification he felt in the reſpect that had been paid to him, in ſeeing the celebrity he had acquired, and in increaſing the ſtock of his ideas.

Had Johnſon been more explicit in his acknowledgments of the hoſpitable and courteous treatment he experienced from a people, who had reaſon to look on him rather as a ſpy than a traveller, and might have ſaid to him—'To diſcover the nakedneſs of the land are ye come,'—he would have given a proof, that he had, in ſome degree, overcome his prejudices againſt them and their country; but they ſeemed to be unconquerable.

One of the laſt duties we learn, is that of conſidering mankind as one great family, and the natives of foreign countries, however differing from us in opinions, manners, cuſtoms, and other particulars, as ſtanding in the ſame relation with ourſelves to the common Father of us all: a duty which leads us, as Thompſon elegantly expreſſes it, to

'—— ſcan our nature with a brother's eye.'

Johnſon's prejudices were too ſtrong to permit him to extend his philanthropy much beyond the limits of his native country, and the pale of his own church; and, that he was unable to conquer his habits of thinking and judging, is the only apology that can be offered for his aſperity towards the people whoſe country and manners he, in his journey above ſpoken of, has taken upon him to deſcribe; or that he has forborne to diſplay any ſuch generous ſentiments reſpecting the inhabitants of Scotland as others have done who have viſited that country.

In

In the cloſe of his book he might have at large expreſſed ſome ſenſe of gratitude for the many courteſies that had been ſhewn him. He might at leaſt have ſaid, 'the barbarous people ſhewed us 'much kindneſs;' but the laſt paragraph is frigid and unanimated to an exceſs of affectation, and muſt ever ſuffer by a compariſon with the concluſion of Mr. Pennant's Tour, which, as well for its elegance, as the benevolent ſpirit which it evidences, I here inſert.

'I look back to the North, and with a grateful 'mind acknowledge every benefit I received, from 'the remoteſt of the Hebrides to the preſent ſpot; 'whether I think of the hoſpitality of the rich, or 'the efforts of unblameable poverty, ſtraining every 'nerve to accommodate me, amidſt dreary hills and 'ungenial ſkies. The little accidents of diet or of 'lodging, affect not me: I look farther than the 'mere differences of living or of cuſtoms, to the 'good heart, and extenſive benevolence, which 'ſoftens every hardſhip, and turns into delicacies 'the groſſeſt fare. My conſtitution never yet was 'diſpoſed to apathy, for which I can claim no merit, 'but am thankful to the author of my frame.'—— And, in a quotation from the Religio Medici of Sir Thomas Brown, he adds:——"I feel not in myſelf "thoſe common antipathies that I can diſcover in "others: thoſe national repugnancies do not touch "me; nor do I behold with prejudice the French, "Italian, Spaniard, or Dutch, much more my fellow-"ſubjects, howſoever remotely placed from me. But, "where I find their actions in balance with my coun-"trymen's, I honour, love, and embrace them in

" ſome degree. I was born in the right climate, but " ſeem to be framed and conſtellated unto all: all " places, all airs, make unto me one country; I " am in England every where and under every me- " ridian."

I muſt here obſerve, as it was a circumſtance that gave him ſome trouble after his return to England, that during his ſtay in the Hebrides, Johnſon was very induſtrious in his enquiries touching the Earſe language, with a view to aſcertain the degree of credit due to certain poems then lately publiſhed and aſcribed to Oſſian, an ancient bard, who, till then, had ſcarce been heard of. His opinion, upon the queſtion of their genuineneſs, is pretty deciſive, and will appear beſt in his own words.

' I ſuppoſe my opinion of the poems of Oſſian is ' already diſcovered. I believe they never exiſted ' in any other form than that which we have ſeen. ' The editor, or author, never could ſhew the ori- ' ginal *; nor can it be ſhewn by any other. To re- ' venge reaſonable incredulity by refuſing evidence, ' is a degree of inſolence with which the world is not ' yet acquainted; and ſtubborn audacity is the laſt ' refuge of guilt. It would be eaſy to ſhew it, if he ' had it; but whence could it be had? It is too long ' to be remembered, and the language formerly had ' nothing written. He has doubtleſs inſerted names ' that circulate in popular ſtories, and may have tranſ- ' lated ſome wandering ballads, if any can be found; ' and the names, and ſome of the images, being re-

* Johnſon had required, that it ſhould be depoſited in either the king's or the mariſchal college at Aberdeen, and ſubmitted to public inſpection; but this was never done.

' collected,

'collected, make an inaccurate auditor imagine, by 'the help of Caledonian bigotry, that he has formerly 'heard the whole.

'I aſked a very learned miniſter in Sky, who had uſed 'all arts to make me believe the genuineneſs of the 'book, whether at laſt he believed it himſelf; but he 'would not anſwer. He wiſhed me to be deceived, 'for the honour of his country; but would not directly 'and formally deceive me. Yet, has this man's teſti-'mony been publicly produced, as of one that held 'Fingal to be the work of Oſſian.

'It is ſaid, that ſome men of integrity profeſs to 'have heard parts of it, but they all heard them when 'they were boys; and it was never ſaid, that any of 'them could recite ſix lines. They remember 'names, and, perhaps, ſome proverbial ſentiments; 'and, having no diſtinct ideas, coin a reſemblance 'without an original. The perſuaſion of the Scots, 'however, is far from univerſal; and, in a queſtion ſo 'capable of proof, why ſhould doubt be ſuffered to 'continue? The editor has been heard to ſay, that 'part of the poem was received by him, in the 'Saxon character. He has then found, by ſome 'peculiar fortune, an unwritten language, written 'in a character which the natives probably never be-'held.

'I have yet ſuppoſed no impoſture, but in the 'publiſher; yet, I am far from certainty, that ſome 'tranſlations have not been lately made, that may 'now be obtruded as parts of the original work. 'Credulity on one part is a ſtrong temptation to de-'ceit on the other, eſpecially to deceit of which no 'perſonal injury is the conſequence, and which flat-

'ters

troverſy concerning the genuineneſs of Phalaris's epiſtles, and with as much acuteneſs as that which tended to aſcertain the queſtion, whether the poems lately aſcribed to Rowlie are not forgeries. Moderators have alſo interpoſed, as there did in the diſpute about the authenticity of the Sybilline oracles, and with as little ſucceſs: the world remains, and is likely ever to remain, without ſatisfaction in reſpect of either the one or the other.

Before this time, Johnſon had undertaken to reviſe the former edition of his Shakeſpeare, and extend his plan, by admitting the corrections and illuſtrations of various other commentators. He therefore, in conjunction with Mr. George Steevens, publiſhed in 1773, a new edition of that author, in ten octavo volumes, which was republiſhed with additions in 1778.

In 1774, the parliament having been diſſolved, and Mr. Wilkes perſiſting in his endeavours to become a repreſentative in that which was about to be choſen, Johnſon addreſſed to the electors of Great Britain a pamphlet, entitled 'The Patriot;' the deſign whereof is to guard them from impoſition, and teach them to diſtinguiſh that which, of itſelf ſeems ſufficiently obvious, the difference between true and falſe patriotiſm; but the madneſs of the people was then at its height, and they needed to be told how often in their lucid intervals they had lamented the deceits practiſed on them by artful and deſigning men. With this view, he deſcribes a patriot, as one whoſe public conduct is regulated by one ſingle motive, the love of his country; who, as an agent in parliament, has, for himſelf, neither hope nor fear, neither kindneſs nor reſentment, but refers every thing

thing to the common intereſt. Theſe, and other marks of patriotiſm by him pointed out, he allows to be ſuch as artifice may counterfeit, or folly miſapply; but he enumerates ſeveral characteriſtical modes of ſpeaking and acting, which may prove a man not to be a patriot; which diſcrimination he illuſtrates in ſundry inſtances, by pointed references to the conduct of many of thoſe men who were courting the favour of the people: theſe, an abridgment would injure, and I therefore give them in his own words: 'It may ſafely be pronounced, that 'thoſe men are no patriots, who, when the nati-'onal honour was vindicated in the ſight of Europe, 'and the Spaniards having invaded what they call 'their own, had ſhrunk to a diſavowal of their at-'tempt, and a relaxation of their claim, would ſtill 'have inſtigated us to a war for a bleak and barren 'ſpot in the Magellanic ocean, of which no uſe could 'be made, unleſs it were a place of exile for the hy-'pocrites of patriotiſm.——He that wiſhes to ſee 'his country robbed of its rights, cannot be a pa-'triot. That man, therefore, is no patriot, who 'juſtifies the ridiculous claims of American uſur-'pation; who endeavours to deprive the nation of 'its natural and lawful authority over its own colo-'nies, thoſe colonies which were ſettled under Eng-'liſh protection, were conſtituted by an Engliſh char-'ter, and have been defended by Engliſh arms. To 'ſuppoſe, that, by ſending out a colony, the nation 'eſtabliſhed an independent power; that when, by 'indulgence and favour, emigrants are become rich, 'they ſhall not contribute to their own defence, but 'at their own pleaſure, and that they ſhall not be

'included,

'included, like millions of their fellow-ſubjects, in 'the general ſyſtem of repreſentation, involves ſuch 'an accumulation of abſurdity, as nothing but the 'ſhew of patriotiſm would palliate.'——His laſt deſignation of the claſs of men whom he means to ſtigmatiſe, is the following:—'That man is not a pa-'triot, who denies his governors their due praiſe, 'and who conceals from the public the benefits which 'they receive. Thoſe, therefore, can lay no claim 'to this illuſtrious appellation, who impute want of 'public ſpirit to the late parliament; an aſſembly of 'men, whom, notwithſtanding ſome fluctuations of 'counſel, and ſome weakneſs of agency, the nation 'muſt always remember with gratitude, ſince it is 'indebted to them for a very ample conceſſion in the 'reſignation of protections, and a wiſe and honeſt 'attempt to improve the conſtitution, in the new judi-'cature inſtituted to try elections.'

Johnſon publiſhed alſo in 1775, a pamphlet intitled, 'Taxation no Tyranny,' an anſwer to the reſolutions and addreſs of the American congreſs; in which, as the ground of his argument, he aſſumes as ſelf-evident, the following propoſition: 'In all the 'parts of human knowledge, whether terminating in 'ſcience merely ſpeculative, or operating upon life 'private or civil, are admitted ſome fundamental 'principles, or common axioms, which, being gene-'rally received, are little doubted, and being little 'doubted, have been rarely proved.

'Of theſe gratuitous and acknowledged truths, 'it is often the fate to become leſs evident by en-'deavours to explain them, however neceſſary ſuch 'endeavours may be made by the miſapprehenſions

'of

'of abſurdity, or the ſophiſtries of intereſt. It is 'difficult to prove the principles of ſcience, becauſe 'notions cannot always be found more intelligible 'than thoſe which are queſtioned. It is difficult to 'prove the principles of practice, becauſe they have, 'for the moſt part, not been diſcovered by inveſti-'gation, but obtruded by experience; and the de-'monſtrator will find, after an operoſe deduction, that 'he has been trying to make that ſeen, which can 'be only felt.

'Of this kind is the poſition that *the ſupreme power 'of every community has the right of requiring from all 'its ſubjects, ſuch contributions as are neceſſary to the 'public ſafety or public proſperity*, which was conſi-'dered by all mankind as compriſing the primary 'and eſſential condition of all political ſociety, till 'it became diſputed by thoſe zealots of anarchy, 'who have denied to the parliament of Britain the 'right of taxing the American colonies.'

With much wit does he ridicule, and with force of reaſoning refute, the arguments founded on the inability of the Americans to bear taxation, their powers of reſiſtance, the ſtubbornneſs of their tempers, and the profits accruing to this country by its commerce with them: theſe, he tells us, are uſed only as auxiliaries to that other, which, as he briefly ſtates it, is—'that to 'tax the colonies is uſurpation and oppreſſion, an in-'vaſion of natural and legal rights, and a violation 'of thoſe principles which ſupport the conſtitution of 'the Engliſh government.

He next conſiders the legal conſequences of migration from a mother-country, and afterwards proceeds to an examination of that fallacious poſition, that from

an

an Engliſhman nothing can be taken but by his own conſent, and of the argument grounded thereon, that the Americans, being unrepreſented in parliament, cannot be ſaid to have conſented in their corporate capacity, and that, refuſing their conſent as individuals, they cannot legally be taxed.

Of this he ſays, that 'it is a poſition of a mighty 'ſound, but that every man that utters it, with what-'ever confidence, and every man that hears it, with 'whatever acquieſcence, if conſent be ſuppoſed to 'imply the power of refuſal, feels to be falſe, for that, 'in wide extended dominions, the buſineſs of the pub-'lic muſt be done by delegation, and the choice of 'delegates is by a ſelect number of electors, who are 'often far from unanimity in their choice; and where 'the numbers approach to equality, almoſt half muſt 'be governed, not only without, but againſt their 'choice.' Of thoſe, who are not electors, he ſays:— 'they ſtand idle and helpleſs ſpectators of the common-'weal, wholly unconcerned in the government of them-'ſelves.' The reſolution of the Congreſs, that their anceſtors, who firſt ſettled the colonies, were, at the time of their emigration from the mother-country, entitled to all the rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural-born ſubjects within the realm of England, he admits; but granting it, he contends, that their boaſt of original rights is at an end, and that, by their emigration, they ſunk down into coloniſts, governed by a charter; and that though, by ſuch emigration, they had not forfeited, ſurrendered, or loſt, any of thoſe rights, they had loſt them by natural effects, that is to ſay, had abandoned them.——'A man,' ſays he, 'can 'be but in one place at once; he cannot have the ad-

'vantages

'vantages of multiplied reſidence. He that will enjoy the brightneſs of ſunſhine, muſt quit the coolneſs of the ſhade. And though an emigrant, having a right to vote for a knight or burgeſs, by croſſing the Atlantic does not nullify that right, he renders the exertion of it no longer poſſible.——But the privileges of an American,' adds he, 'ſcorn the limits of place; they are part of himſelf, and cannot be loſt by departure from his country; they float in the air, or glide under the ocean.'

He next conſiders the legal operation of charters, and forgets not to note, that from the exemption of the firſt ſettlers in Maſſachuſet's bay from taxes for ſeven years, it muſt be inferred, that at the end thereof they were liable to taxation.

It is not my purpoſe to give at length the ſeveral arguments contained in this moſt excellent pamphlet. I ſhall, therefore, content myſelf with extracting from it a few paſſages, which ſtand diſtinguiſhed from others, either by their wit, or the ſtrength of reaſoning diſplayed in them. Of that claſs are theſe that follow:

'To be prejudiced is always to be weak; yet there are prejudices ſo near to laudable, that they have often been praiſed, and are always pardoned. To love their country has been conſidered as virtue in men whoſe love could not be otherwiſe than blind, becauſe their preference was made without compariſon; but it has never been my fortune to find, either in ancient or modern writers, any honourable mention of thoſe who have, with equal blindneſs, hated their country.

the artifices of thoſe, who, by ſpecious oratory and falſe reaſoning, were courting popularity, and deluding the inhabitants of this country into a reſignation of their rights. It was not, ſaid they, for a man of his abſtracted genius, a philoſopher, a moraliſt, and a poet, to concern himſelf in the contentions between a parent-ſtate and its offspring. The muſes, gentle creatures! are of no party: they

'——————————— in a ring
'Ay round about Jove's altar ſing.'
IL PENSEROSO.

And, in conformity to this character, it behoved him to be a ſilent ſpectator of all that was paſſing, and leave the agitation of political queſtions to men, whoſe malevolence comprehended in it all the qualifications neceſſary in the courſe of ſuch a warfare*.

But Johnſon was of another mind: he was conſcious of his own abilities, and felt within himſelf ſuch powers of reaſoning, ſuch a knowledge of the principles of civil policy, as qualified him for a conteſt, not with American planters, or colony agents, but with tumid orators, factious lawyers, and intereſted ſelfiſh merchants. And, in this exerciſe of his pen,

* In like manner did they before reſent the publication by Mr. Hogarth of a print called 'The Times,' the intent whereof was to unite the people, and facilitate the negociations for peace. The patriots in oppoſition to Sir Robert Walpole had, in their time, viz. immediately after the publication of the Rake's Progreſs, endeavoured to engage Mr. Hogarth to deſign a ſeries of prints, to be intitled 'The Stateſman's Progreſs,' but he, ſcorning to proſtitute his art to the purpoſes of faction, rejected their offer.

he

he was not leſs ſincere than formidable. Admitting him to be a tory, he was a friend to both the eccleſiaſtical and civil eſtabliſhment of his country; and he thought it his duty, as a good ſubject, when the legiſlative authority was denied, to refute the arguments of ſuch as reſiſted it.

It has been inſinuated, that in his vindication of the meaſures of government, as contained in the ſeveral pamphlets before cited, Johnſon had an eye rather to the obligation which his penſion implied, than to the queſtions in debate. This, if it could be proved, might be an objection to his integrity, but ſets him but on a level with his opponents, whoſe apparent and known motive to oppoſition and clamour was the deſire of popularity, as a means, whereby the ambitious among them hoped to attain power, and the indigent to acquire places or emoluments; and who will ſay, that an itch for vulgar applauſe is not as corrupt a motive to an action as any that can be imputed to one in Johnſon's ſituation? But with matters of opinion, motives have nothing to do: arguments alone are the weapons of controverſy. With reſpect to the firſt pamphlet, 'The Falſe Alarm,' the queſtion there agitated was, whether the expulſion of a member of one of the houſes of parliament, by a majority of votes, imported a deſign on the liberties of the people; and impartial poſterity, which muſt decide upon it, will look no farther than to the reaſoning of each party.

Of thoſe who endeavour at this time to excite ſuſpicions of this nature, it may be truly ſaid, that they underſtand neither the conſtitution, nor the politics of this country; nor do they know, that the former

is now ſo amended by the conceſſions which, ſince the reſtoration, have been made by the crown to the people, that leſs is to be feared from princes or their miniſters, who are ever reſponſible for their conduct, than from artful and deſigning men, ſtimulated by ambition, or provoked by diſappointment, and furniſhed with the faſcinating powers of popular eloquence.

I forbear to animadvert on the two next ſucceeding pamphlets, 'Falkland's iſlands,' and 'The Patriot;' but ſhall obſerve that the laſt of the four, 'Taxation 'no Tyranny,' has not only never received an anſwer, but the converſe of the propoſition has never yet been ſo proved, by arguments founded on legal principles, as to make a vindication of Johnſon's reaſoning neceſſary, for any other purpoſe, than that of preventing the ignorant from being miſled. The principle aſſumed by Johnſon, that 'the ſupreme power of every 'community has the right of requiring from all its 'ſubjects ſuch contributions as are neceſſary to the 'public ſafety, or public proſperity,' is as ſelf-evident, as that obedience is due from children to parents, and is not refuted by the aſſertion, that the conſent of thoſe who are required thus to contribute, is neceſſary, for, were it ſo, what becomes of the right? Neither is the poſition, that taxation and repreſentation are correlative, to be admitted as a principle of the Engliſh conſtitution, ſeeing it does not, nor ever did, exiſt as a part of it; and that the far greater number of the ſubjects of England, men who are not freeholders to a certain amount, copyholders, who are a third of the landholders in this kingdom, and all women, are unrepreſented in parliament, and bound by laws enacted by the repreſentatives of others, but

in

in no ſenſe of themſelves. In cities, and boroughs, the repreſentation is often of the meaneſt of the people; in London, for inſtance, where a mechanic, if he be a liveryman, has a vote, and a freeholder, wanting that qualification, though aſſeſſed ever ſo high to the land-tax, has none.

This aſſertion might poſſibly have place in a ſtate about to be founded, as none ever was or is likely to be, on ſolemn agreement, or that political fiction called an original contract; but, the conſtitution of a ſtate already formed, is to be taken as we find it. Nor has any one of thoſe who deny the right of a mother-country to tax its colonies, attempted to prove an exemption, by any other arguments than are to be found in Mr. Locke's Eſſay on Government, a diſcourſe of general import, and which applies to no exiſting conſtitution on earth *.

The above tracts, as they contain no evidence of a perſonal attachment of the author to thoſe who, at the reſpective times of their appearance, had the direction of the public councils, are a refutation of all thoſe ſlanders which they drew on him; and, as

* I once had a converſation on this ſubject with a nobleman, who afterwards attained to the height of power in the adminiſtration, and was againſt the proſecution of the American war; the ſame who was once heard to utter this ſtabbing truth, that the ſun of Great Britain's glory was then ſet; who went no farther than to doubt of the right above ſpoken of; and, for this doubt he had no better a reaſon to urge, than that Cromwell, in his levies on the Americans for the common ſervice, contented himſelf with a bare requiſition of ſuch ſupplies as they, in their diſcretion, ſhould judge proportionate to their circumſtances and abilities. The ſame offer had been made by Mr. Grenville to the American agents here; but, being kept back from their conſtituents, it failed of its effect.

the ſubjects of them, ſeverally, are queſtions of the greateſt national importance, ſufficiently diſtinguiſh him from thoſe hireling ſcribblers, who, in the conteſts of factions, are retained on the ſide of either party, and whom the vulgar ſtyle political writers. In like manner did Addiſon and Hoadly employ their talents: they were both friends of government, and wrote in defence of the public meaſures, and not only eſcaped obloquy, but were and ſtill are celebrated as lovers of their country.

I have hitherto forborne to ſpeak, otherwiſe than in general terms, of Johnſon's political principles; but, the taſk of reviewing the tracts above cited, has revived in my memory many of his ſentiments, which, at different times, he communicated to me, on the ſubjects of government, the Engliſh conſtitution, and the motives to party oppoſition. That he was a tory, he not only never heſitated to confeſs, but, by his frequent invectives againſt the whigs, was forward to proclaim: yet, was he not ſo beſotted in his notions, as to abett what is called the patriarchal ſcheme, as delineated by Sir Robert Filmer and other writers on government; nor, with others of a more ſober caſt, to acquieſce in the opinion that, becauſe ſubmiſſion to governors is, in general terms, inculcated in the Holy Scriptures, the reſiſtance of tyranny and oppreſſion is, in all caſes, unlawful: he ſeemed rather to adopt the ſentiments of Hooker on the ſubject, as explained by Hoadly, and, by conſequence, to look on ſubmiſſion to lawful authority as a moral obligation: he, therefore, condemned the conduct of James the ſecond during his ſhort reign; and, had he been a ſubject of that weak and infatuated monarch, would,

I am

I am perſuaded, have reſiſted any invaſion of his right, or unwarrantable exertion of power, with the ſame ſpirit, as did the preſident and fellows of Magdalen college, or thoſe conſcientious divines the ſeven biſhops. This diſpoſition, as it leads to whiggiſm, one would have thought, might have reconciled him to the memory of his ſucceſſor, whoſe exerciſe of the regal authority among us merited better returns than were made him; but, it had no ſuch effect: he never ſpoke of king William but in terms of reproach, and, in his opinion of him, ſeemed to adopt all the prejudices of jacobite bigotry and rancour.

For the Engliſh conſtitution, as originally framed, he ever expreſſed a profound reverence. He underſtood it well, and had noted in his mind the changes it had at various periods undergone, that is to ſay, firſt, in the reign of Hen. VII. when the yeomanry were put into a ſtate of competition with the nobility; afterwards, when by the abolition of tenures, and the putting down the court of wards and liveries, occaſion was given to Sir Harbottle Grimſton to ſay that, in that tranſaction, neither did the crown know what it loſt, nor the people what they had gained; and laſtly, by the erecting a monied, in oppoſition to the landed, intereſt, and the introduction of the ſcience and practice of funding.

He, therefore, looked not on Magna Charta as the palladium of our liberties, (knowing full well, that, excepting that chapter thereof, which has been ſo often partially cited, that is to ſay, with the omiſſion of the words, vel per legem terræ *, very little of the whole

* Nullus liber homo capiatur, vel impriſonetur, aut diſſeiſietur de

whole ſtatute will apply to the conſtitution in its now improved ſtate;) but to the ſubſequent conceſſions of the crown in favour of the people, ſuch as are the petition of right, the habeas-corpus act, the bill of rights, and numerous other ſtatutes of a like beneficial tendency.

To party-oppoſition he ever expreſſed great averſion; and, of the pretences of patriots, always ſpoke with indignation and contempt. He partook of the ſhort-lived joy that infatuated the public, when Sir Robert Walpole ceaſed to have the direction of the national councils, and truſted to the profeſſions of Mr. Pulteney and his adherents, who called themſelves the country-party, that all elections ſhould thenceforward be free and uninfluenced, and that bribery and corruption, which were never practiſed but by courtiers and their agents, ſhould be no more. A few weeks, nay, a few days, convinced Johnſon, and indeed all England, that what had aſſumed the appearance of patriotiſm, was perſonal hatred and inveterate malice in ſome, and in others, an ambition for that power, which, when they had got it, they knew not how to exerciſe. A change of men, and in ſome reſpect, of meaſures, took place: Mr. Pulteney's ambition was gratified by a peerage; the wants of his aſſociates were relieved by places, and ſeats at the public boards; and, in a ſhort time, the ſtream of government reſumed its former channel, and ran with a current as even as it had ever done.

de libero tenemento ſuo, vel libertatibus, vel liberis conſuetudinibus ſuis, aut utlegatur, aut exuletur, aut aliquo modo deſtruatur, nec ſuper eum ibimus, nec ſuper eum mittemus, niſi per legale judicium parium ſuorum, vel per legem terræ. Nulli vendemus, nulli negabimus, aut differemus juſtitiam, vel rectum.

Upon

Upon this developement of the motives, the views, and the conſiſtency of the above-mentioned band of patriots, Johnſon once remarked to me, that it had given more ſtrength to government than all that had been written in its defence, meaning thereby, that it had deſtroyed all confidence in men of that character. Little did he then think, that the people of this country would again be deluded, by fallacious reaſoning and ſpecious eloquence, into a fruitleſs expenditure of near one hundred millions, or that ſtatues would ever be erected to eternize the memory of a miniſter, of whom, in 1771, he ſaid it would be happy if the nation ſhould diſmiſs him to nameleſs obſcurity.

Hiſtory has been ſaid to be philoſophy teaching by example, and well would it be for mankind, if they would convert events into precepts, and not poſtpone their care to prevent evils, till their own experience ſhall have brought them home to themſelves. New generations of men ariſe in ſucceſſion, who, in the nonage of their faculties, are credulous, weak, and open to deceit: theſe, unhackneyed in the ways of the world, truſt to the profeſſions of all who pretend a friendſhip for them; and, when they are told they are ill governed, are as ready, as were the Iſraelites of old, to murmur againſt their rulers. And let all be ſaid that can of a principle in men inveſted with power, to abuſe it and become tyrants, the hiſtory of the world will inform us, that there is alſo a diſeaſe, which the Scriptures emphatically term, the madneſs of the people, from which evils greater than from deſpotiſm are to be feared, and that government, even where it is beſt adminiſtered, ſubſiſts more by force than by the conſent of thoſe who derive benefit from it.

What

What an advantage, then, does this diſpoſition in a people give to ambitious men, endowed with that kind of eloquence, which faſcinates without conviction, and, while it delights, ſtupifies!

His frequent reflections on the politics of this country, and the willingneſs of the people to be deceived, had begot in Johnſon ſuch an apathy, as rendered him deaf to the calls of thoſe who were watching over our deareſt rights. When the cry was loudeſt againſt general warrants, he took not the alarm; and, when they were declared illegal, he proteſted to me, that he would, at no time of his life, have given half a crown to be for ever indemnified againſt their operation. The queſtion of the legality of that kind of proceſs is now at an end, and I will not arraign the deciſion that condemned it; but it will ever remain a queſtion, whether we have not loſt more by it than we have gained; and, that the friends of liberty, particularly the citizens of London, may be enabled to diſcuſs it, I will furniſh them with a few facts, that I believe they have never yet been aware of.

Few are ſo ignorant as not to know, that the Engliſh manufactures excel thoſe of all other countries; but many there are who need to be told, that the time may come, when they ſhall ceaſe to maintain that character. Many of the princes of Europe have become emulous of our greatneſs, and have long been labouring to eſtabliſh, in their dominions, ſuch articles of trade, as ſhould not only rival our's, but, in reſpect of cheapneſs, gain a preference at foreign markets. To this end, it has, for ſome years paſt, been the practice of the emiſſaries of foreign courts, by their agents, and the temptation of large premiums,

premiums, to engage artificers to leave this country, and, taking with them their wives and families, as alſo their engines, tools, and implements of their reſpective trades, to ſettle abroad. Clothiers, weavers, frame-work-knitters, watch-makers, and men of various other occupations, have been the people whom they have chiefly thus inveigled, and have, from time to time, in great numbers, in ſhips provided and ſtationed for the purpoſe, tranſported out of the kingdom. To check this practice, acts of parliament have been made, which lay ſuch emigrants under great diſabilities, even to the depriving them of the privileges of ſubjects, and others that inflict heavy penalties on thoſe that ſeduce them; and the aid of government has been frequently implored to reſtrain, in their flight from their native land, ſhip-loads of the moſt uſeful of all ſubjects. The method has uniformly been, upon information given at his office, for a ſecretary of ſtate to iſſue his warrant, a general one, that is to ſay, without any ſpecification of names, to ſtop the ſailing of the veſſel, which, perhaps, was lying at Wapping, Ratcliff, or Blackwall, ready with the tide to depart. Warrants of this kind ſeldom failed of their effect; the emigrants were ſeized, and the miſchief prevented.

This relief it is now not in the power of government or its miniſters to grant: the anſwer to ſuch an application is now, and muſt be — 'General warrants 'have been determined to be illegal: furniſh us with 'the names of the perſons whom you would have ap-'prehended, or we cannot help you*.'

The

* In caſes where it has been poſſible to aid the manufacturers of this

The licence, which this determination affords, has already begun to operate, and, perhaps, in no inſtance more than in the article of watches. For many years paſt, this manufacture has flouriſhed to ſuch a degree, that large fortunes have been acquired by it, and that chiefly in our commerce with Spain, in which country, a watch, fabricated in England, has been deemed a preſent for a grandee, and even for a ſovereign prince. It is well known, that the late king of Spain was extremely fond of clocks and watches, and that he was uſed, by letters in his own hand-writing, to correſpond with Mr. Ellicot on the ſubject of his art; and, that this ingenious artificer

this kingdom, the ſecretaries of ſtate are, however, ſtill ready to exert the little authority which the deciſion on general warrants has left them, as will appear by the following article of news, extracted from the St. James's Chronicle of the tenth of December, 1785:

'Liverpool, Dec. 1. Tueſday laſt, a man was committed to 'jail, on a charge of having in his poſſeſſion a great number of 'machines for ſpinning, &c. of cotton, with intent to get ſuch 'machines conveyed to the dominions of the emperor of Germany. 'He alſo ſtands charged with another very ſerious offence, the enticing a number of manufacturers in the cotton branch to go and 'ſettle in the emperor's dominions. The vigilance and activity 'of miniſtry have traced out this moſt notorious offender, and 'ſeveral others engaged with him in the ſame pernicious ſcheme, 'big with deſtruction to this country. The penalty for having 'manufacturing machines. implements, &c. in a perſon's cuſtody, 'with the bare intent of exporting them to any place out of his 'majeſty's dominions, is 200l. and forfeiture of ſuch manufacturing machines, implements, &c. and the penalty of perſuading, or attempting to perſuade, any artificer in manufactures to reſide in any place out of the king's dominions, is '500l. for the firſt offence, and twelve months' impriſonment, 'and 1000l. and two years' impriſonment, for every future offence.

learn

learnt the Spaniſh language, to enable him to maintain the correſpondence with his majeſty. Since that time, the French, and alſo the Genevans, have become our rivals in this curious ſpecies of mechaniſm, and we have lately experienced, that Engliſh watches no longer find their vent abroad *. The woollen, the ſilk, the linen, and the cotton manufactures have been obliged to the legiſlature for aſſiſtance againſt the endeavours of other European powers, to eſtabliſh them in their ſeveral countries, where, as labour is cheaper than it is with us, they would have a good chance to flouriſh, and exclude us from foreign markets.

Theſe miſchiefs have followed from the reſtraint of a power, which, as it had oftener been exerciſed for the benefit of the trade and manufactures of this kingdom, than to the hurt of individuals, might well have been ſuffered to remain where it was, eſpecially as the miniſters thereof were, at all times, reſponſible for any abuſe of it.

The probable conſequence of this innovation will be, that in a few years, we ſhall ſee the French and neighbouring nations excel us as much in other manufactures, as they already do in thoſe of cambrick and paper, in printing, and other of the manual arts.

* 'Twelve thouſand watches have already been brought back, in 'the ſhips arrived this ſummer from India, which has created no 'ſmall ſtir and combuſtion among the dealers in that article. They 'were not returned for want of a good market, but for their bad 'materials, and worſe finiſhing; the natives being now become 'almoſt as good judges of this branch of Britiſh manufacture as 'many of our European makers.' St. James's Chronicle, 19th July, 1785.

The calamities which enſue from the ſtagnation of commerce, are many and grievous, and, when theſe begin to be felt, as they ſhortly may, thoſe good people of this country, who have of late been ſo clamorous for liberty, may recover their wits, and be half perſuaded, that a ſinking trade, empty warehouſes and unfurniſhed ſhops are greater evils than any loyal and peaceable ſubject need fear from the operation of a general warrant.

The publication of Johnſon's political tracts, exhibited him to the world in a new character: he ceaſed now to be conſidered as one who, having been occupied in literary ſtudies, and more converſant with books than with men, knew little of active life, the views of parties, or the artifices of deſigning men: on the contrary, they diſcovered that he had, by the force of his own genius, and the obſervations he had made on the hiſtory of our own and other countries, attained to ſuch ſkill in the grand leading principles of political ſcience, as are ſeldom acquired by thoſe in the moſt active and important ſtations, even after long experience; and that, whatever opinions he might have formed on this ſubject, he had ability by ſtrong reaſoning to defend, and by a manly and convincing eloquence to enforce.

Mr. Thrale, a man of ſlow conceptions, but of a ſound judgment, was not one of the laſt that diſcerned in his friend this talent, and believing, that the exerciſe of it might redound to the benefit of the public, entertained a deſign of bringing Johnſon into parliament. We muſt ſuppoſe that he had previouſly determined to furniſh him with a legal qualification, and Johnſon, it is certain, was willing to accept the truſt,

truſt. Mr. Thrale had two meetings with the miniſter, who, at firſt, ſeemed inclined to find him a ſeat; but, whether upon converſation he doubted his fitneſs for his purpoſe, or that he thought himſelf in no need of his aſſiſtance, the project failed.

Had it ſucceeded, and Johnſon become a member of the houſe of Commons, as he was one of the moſt correct ſpeakers ever known *, he would undoubtedly have exhibited to that aſſembly a perfect model of ſenatorial eloquence; and might probably have prevented the introduction therein of a great number of words, phraſes, and forms of ſpeech, to which neither dictionaries, nor the example of any Engliſh writer of authority, have given a ſanction †.

Johnſon was a little ſoured at this diſappointment: he ſpoke of lord North in terms of aſperity, as indeed he did of all thoſe miniſters whoſe councils indicated a want of ſpirit to carry into action the meaſures which were reſolved on as expedient: in which particular, the above miniſter muſt ſurely

* This all who knew him can atteſt. His written compoſitions were alſo ſo correct, that he, in general, truſted them to the preſs without a reviſal. Raſſelas he never red till it was printed; and having written at Mr. Langton's room at Oxford, an Idler, while the poſt was preparing to ſet out, that gentleman would have peruſed it; but Johnſon would not ſuffer him, ſaying—'You ſhall 'not do more than I have done myſelf.'

† Such as theſe: a truiſm——reciprocity——living in habits of friendſhip——a ſhade of difference——that line of conduct——ſentiments in uniſon——blinking the queſtion——I am bold to ſay——I ſhould then commit myſelf——and others equally affected and ſingular. See the ſpeeches in the public papers for the laſt ſeven years.

be exculpated, whoſe deſigns, it is too well known, were blaſted by thoſe to whom the execution of them was committed. Of the abilities of Mr. Grenville, he alſo entertained but a mean opinion, for his giving up the Manila ranſom.—'Grenville,' he would ſay, 'if he 'could have got the Manila ranſom, was able to have 'counted the money, but he knew not how to enforce 'the payment of it.' Of Sir Robert Walpole, notwithſtanding that he had written againſt him in the early part of his life, he had a high opinion: he ſaid of him, that he was a fine fellow, and that his very enemies deemed him ſo before his death: he honoured his memory for having kept this country in peace many years, as alſo for the goodneſs and placability of his temper; of which Pulteney, earl of Bath, thought ſo highly, that, in a converſation with Johnſon, he ſaid, that Sir Robert was of a temper ſo calm and equal, and ſo hard to be provoked, that he was very ſure he never felt the bittereſt invectives againſt him for half an hour *. To the ſame purpoſe, Johnſon related the following anecdote, which he ſaid he had

* To this motive for honouring him he might have added others; namely, the pains he took to extend the commerce of this country. Dean Tucker has enumerated the many ſtatutes which he procured to be paſſed for this purpoſe, and has both aſcertained their number, and demonſtrated the benefits which, for a ſeries of years, we have been deriving from them. By the good underſtanding which he kept up with cardinal Fleury, he drew the attention of that miniſter from the marine of France, and the conſequence thereof was, that in our ſea-engagements with the French, under Anſon, Warren, Hawke, and other commanders, their fleets proved an eaſy conqueſt; for which reaſon, the memory of cardinal Fleury is execrated, even to this day, by the French, who ſay, he was ca- by the Engliſh miniſter.

from

from lord North: Sir Robert having got into his hands ſome treaſonable letters of his inveterate enemy, Will. Shippen, one of the heads of the Jacobite faction, he ſent for him, and burned them before his face. Some time afterwards, Shippen had occaſion to take the oaths to the government in the houſe of commons, which, while he was doing, Sir Robert, who ſtood next him, and knew his principles to be the ſame as ever, ſmiled:—'Egad Robin,' ſaid Shippen, who had obſerved him, 'that's hardly fair.'

It is not a little wonderful, that Sir Robert Walpole could preſerve ſuch an equanimity under the greateſt provocations, as he is known to have done, or that he could entertain a kindneſs for any one, ſeeing he is known to have aſſerted, that every man has his price; to which I will add, from unqueſtionable authority, that ſome time before his death, he uttered this ſentiment—'that ſo great is the depra-'vity of the human heart, that miniſters, who only 'could know it, were, in charity to mankind, bound 'to keep it a ſecret.'——Agreeable to this of Dr. Young,

'Heav'n's Sovereign ſaves all Beings but himſelf,
'That hideous ſight a naked human heart.'

Night Thoughts, Narciſſa.

In the year 1775, Johnſon received from the univerſity of Oxford the higheſt teſtimony of eſteem, which that learned body could confer, in a diploma creating him a doctor in the faculty of law. The inſtrument bears date the thirtieth day of March, in the above year, and recites the motives for this honourable diſtinction in

the following eulogium :—'Sciatis, virum illuſtrem, 'Samuelem Johnſon, in omni humaniorum literarum 'genere eruditum, omniumque ſcientiarum compre-'henſione feliciſſimum, ſcriptis ſuis, ad popularium 'mores formandos ſummâ verborum elegantiâ ac 'ſententiarum gravitate compoſitis, ita olim incla-'ruiſſe, ut dignus videretur cui ab academiâ ſuâ 'eximia quædam laudis præmia deferrentur, quique 'in venerabilem magiſtrorum ordinem ſummâ cum 'dignitate co-optaretur. Cum vero eundem clariſſi-'mum virum tot poſtea tantique labores, in patriâ 'præſertim linguâ ornandâ et ſtabiliendâ feliciter 'impenſi, ita inſigniverint, ut in literarum repub-'licâ princeps jam et primarius jure habeatur, Nos 'Cancellarius, &c.'

In the ſummer of the ſame year, Johnſon accepted of an invitation from his friend Mr. Thrale, to make one of a party with him and his wife, in a tour to Paris. No memoirs of this journey, in his own hand-writing, are extant; nor is the want thereof to be regretted, unleſs it were certain, that he was enough maſter of the French language to be able to converſe in it*, and that he had noted down the reflections he may be ſuppoſed to have made in a viſit to a ſtrange country, and a reſidence among a people whoſe national character differs from our own. His garb and mode of dreſſing, if it could be called dreſſing, had long been ſo inflexibly determined, as

* I have ſome reaſon to think, that at his firſt coming to town, and while he had lodgings in the Strand, he frequented Slaughter's coffee-houſe, with a view to acquire a habit of ſpeaking French, but he never could attain to it. Lockman uſed the ſame method, and ſucceeded, as Johnſon himſelf once told me.

to

to reſiſt all the innovations of faſhion. His friends had therefore great difficulty in perſuading him to ſuch a compliance in this reſpect, as might ſerve to keep them in countenance, and ſecure him from the danger of ridicule: he yielded to their remonſtrances ſo far as to dreſs in a ſuit of black and a Bourgeois wig, but reſiſted their importunity to wear ruffles *.

In the courſe of this narrative it has been ſhewn, that although, and that by his own declarations, the literary faculties of Johnſon were, at moſt times, inert, and that he could ſeldom be ſtimulated to the exerciſe of his pen, but by the immediate proſpect of gain; yet, he was ever ready to aſſiſt the publication of any work that had either novelty or any intrinſic worth, with a life of the author, a dedication, preface, or an introduction tending to recommend it, as in the caſe of 'Aſcham's Pieces,' the laſt edition of Sir Thomas Browne's 'Chriſtian Morals,' and Kennedy's 'Scripture 'Chronology,' and many more, all of which he uſhered into the world, and, for aught that appears, without any recompence. With a like benevolent diſpoſition, he was ready to aſſiſt with a prologue, or an epilogue, the repreſentation of a play written by a friend; or with an occaſional addreſs of the ſame kind, under circumſtances that put it in his power to promote the intereſts of the family of a deceaſed author: accordingly, he wrote, for his friend Goldſmith, a prologue to a comedy written by him, called 'The Good-'natured man,' and acted in 1769; and, for the grand-daughter of Milton, a prologue to Comus, exhibited on the fifth day of April, 1750.

* By a note in his diary it appears, that he laid out near thirty pounds in cloaths for this journey.

The ſame good office he performed for the wife and children of Mr. Hugh Kelly, the author of a comedy called, 'A Word to the Wiſe,' which, in the year 1770, was brought on the ſtage, but, by the malice of a party, was obſtructed in the repreſentation, and conſigned to oblivion. This perſon, it is ſaid, was originally a ſtay-maker, but, being a man of wit and parts, he quitted that unmanly occupation, and having, as we muſt ſuppoſe, ſome ſlender means to enable him thereto, he betook himſelf to reading and ſtudy, and, at a time when the diſcipline of the inns of court was ſcandalouſly lax, got himſelf called to the bar, and practiſed at the quarter-ſeſſions under me, but with little ſucceſs. In aid of this profeſſion, he became the conductor of a paper called 'The Public Ledger,' and took up that precarious one of a writer for the ſtage, in which he met with ſome encouragement, till it was inſinuated, that he was a penſioner of the miniſter, and, therefore, a fit object of patriotic vengeance. He died in the year 1769, and leaving a wife and five children unprovided for, the proprietors of Covent-garden theatre, in 1777, with their uſual generoſity, permitted to be acted at their houſe, for the benefit of his family, the comedy above-mentioned; and, to ſoften the hearts of the audience, Johnſon was eaſily prevailed on to write upon the occaſion the following very fine lines:

'This night preſents a play, which public rage,
'Or right or wrong, once hooted from the ſtage:
'From zeal, or malice, now no more we dread,
'For Engliſh vengeance *wars not with the dead**.

'A generous

* To the aſſertion contained in this line, I here note an exception.

'A generous foe regards with pitying eye
'The man whom fate has laid where all muſt lie.
'To wit, reviving from it's author's duſt,
'Be kind, ye judges, or at leaſt be juſt:
'Let no renew'd hoſtilities invade,
'Th' oblivious grave's inviolable ſhade.
'Let one great payment every claim appeaſe,
'And him who cannot hurt, allow to pleaſe;
'To pleaſe by ſcenes, unconſcious of offence,
'By harmleſs merriment, or uſeful ſenſe.
'Where aught of bright or fair the piece diſplays,
'Approve it only—'tis too late to praiſe.
'If want of ſkill or want of care appear,
'Forbear to hiſs—the poet cannot hear.

ception. Whoever has viewed the monument of Camden in the ſouth tranſept of Weſtminſter abbey, muſt, till very lately, have remarked, that his buſt thereon was defaced, the noſe having been ſtricken off. This was no recent accident, but a deſigned injury to his memory, done to it by an exaſperated young man who lived at the time of its erection. The fact is related by Dr. Thomas Smith, in his life of Camden, prefixed to his letters, 4to. 1691, and is to this effect. Camden, in his annals, ſub anno 1595, had related, that a young lady, whoſe name he ſuppreſſed, but whom I conjecture to have been the daughter of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton, and one of queen Elizabeth's maids of honour, had been ſeduced by the arts of a young man of high rank, to whom ſhe was afterwards married, and who became diſtinguiſhed for his bravery and learning, Sir Walter Raleigh, as I ſuppoſe. This fact, though notorious in the court, gave ſuch offence to the young man above-mentioned, who was a relation of the lady, as induced him to revenge himſelf on the author's memory by mutilating his effigy. The injury done to it has, however, been lately repaired, and the feature reſtored, by the direction, and at the expence of a friend to the memory of Camden.

'By all, like him, muſt praiſe and blame be found,
'At laſt, a fleeting gleam, or empty ſound.
'Yet then ſhall calm reflection bleſs the night,
'When liberal pity dignified delight;
'When pleaſure fired her torch at virtue's flame,
'And mirth was bounty with an humbler name.'

In the year 1777, he was induced, by a caſe of a very extraordinary nature, to the exerciſe of that indiſcriminate humanity, which, in him, was obedient to every call. A divine of the church of England, Dr. William Dodd, already mentioned in the courſe of this account, and who had aſſiſted in the education of the preſent earl of Cheſterfield, having, by his extravagance, involved himſelf in difficulties, had recourſe to the following, among many other expedients, to raiſe money. As a pretended agent for this nobleman, and in conſideration of the ſum of 6001. he forged the hand of the earl to the grant of an annuity, chargeable on his eſtate, which forgery being detected, Dodd was convicted of felony, and ſentenced to the uſual puniſhment for ſuch offences. The public were, at firſt, very little intereſted in the fate of a man, who, beſides the arts he had practiſed to make himſelf conſpicuous as a man of letters, had rendered himſelf ſcandalous, by an offer, to the firſt law-officer in the kingdom, of a large ſum of money, for a preſentation to a valuable rectory; but, by various artifices, and particularly, the inſertion of his name in the public papers, with ſuch palliatives as he and his friends could invent, never without the epithet of *unfortunate*, they were betrayed into ſuch an enthuſiaſtic commiſeration of his caſe,

eaſe, as would have led a ſtranger to believe, that himſelf had been no acceſſary to his diſtreſſes, but that they were the inflictions of Providence.

Great endeavours were uſed with the earl, to prevail on him to deſiſt from a proſecution, but without effect. His lordſhip preferred a bill of indictment for felony, and the ſame being found before me at Hicks's Hall, upon the evidence of himſelf, and other witneſſes, Dodd was, at the Old Bailey, arraigned thereon, and convicted.

The evidence on the trial, was ſo very full and clear, that the jury heſitated not in the leaſt to pronounce him guilty of the indictment; and, no circumſtances of alleviation appearing, they did not, as juries ſeldom fail to do where that is the caſe, recommend him as an object of that clemency, which his majeſty is ever ready to exert, in favour of thoſe who have the leaſt claim to it.

We live in an age in which humanity is the faſhion. If the reports of the gaol-committee in 1726 are, in all particulars, to be depended on, and do not exaggerate the facts therein ſtated, there was a time when, as well priſoners for debt, as for offences, were cruelly treated by thoſe who had the cuſtody of them; but, at this day, the temper of the times is under a contrary biaſs, for, not only in actual confinement, are priſoners treated with greater lenity than till of late years was ever known, but, in courts of juſtice, the regard ſhewn to offenders falls little ſhort of reſpect. In proſecutions at the ſuit of the crown, the indulgence of priſoners is nearly as great as it ought to be, were that true which the law does but hardly preſume, viz. that every offender, who is brought to a legal trial, is

is innocent, till his guilt be proved. Thoſe whoſe duty it is to conduct the evidence, fearing the cenſure that others have incurred by a contrary treatment of priſoners, are reſtrained from enforcing it; and, as it is an exerciſe of compaſſion that coſts nothing, and is ſure to gain the applauſe of vulgar hearers, every one intereſts himſelf on the ſide of the priſoner, and hopes, by his zeal in his behalf, to be diſtinguiſhed as a man of more than ordinary humanity.

The tenderneſs of our courts of juſtice, in proſecutions that affect the life or liberty of the offender, is acknowledged and celebrated by all writers on the ſubjects of juriſprudence and internal policy; but, beſide this, the chances of eluding conviction, or, if not that, of puniſhment, are ſo many, that they deter many injured perſons from the proſecution of great criminals; and, as it is a ſpeculation that has often employed my thoughts, I will endeavour at an enumeration of them. The chances are theſe: 1 That the offender is not diſcovered, or, if diſcovered, not apprehended. 2 That the perſon injured is not both able and willing to proſecute him. 3 That the evidence is not ſufficient for the finding of the bill, or if it be, 4 That the indictment is ſo framed as that the offender cannot be convicted on it; or, 5 That the witneſſes to ſupport it may die, or be prevailed upon to abſcond, or to ſoften their teſtimony; or, 6 They may be entangled or made to contradict themſelves, or each other, in a croſs examination, by the priſoner's council; or, 7 A mild judge; or, 8 An ignorant or perverſe jury: 9 A recommendation to mercy; or, 10 Appeals to the public by ſtates of his caſe in pamphlets, or news-paper paragraphs,

ragraphs, which the Newgate ſolicitors know very well how to get drawn. 11 Practices with a jury to obtain a declaration, that ſome of them were diſſatisfied with the verdict. 12 A motion in arreſt of judgment. 13 A writ of error grounded on ſome defect or miſtake on the face of the record. 14 An eſcape; and laſtly, Intereſt to procure a pardon *.

But

* To this purpoſe, and as a caveat againſt ſeeking redreſs for injuries by going to law, I recollect a ſaying of a very ſagacious and experienced citizen, Mr. Selwin, who formerly was a candidate for the office of chamberlain, and miſſed it only by ſeven votes out of near ſeven thouſand.—'A man,' ſays he, 'who deliberates about going to law, ſhould have, firſt, a good cauſe; ſecondly, a good purſe; thirdly, an honeſt and ſkilful attorney; fourthly, good evidence; fifthly, able council; ſixthly, an upright judge; ſeventhly, an intelligent jury; and, with all theſe on his ſide, if he has not, eighthly, good luck, it is odds but he miſcarries in his ſuit.'

The ſame perſon told me the following ſtory: He was once requeſted, by a man under ſentence of death in Newgate, to come and ſee him in his cell, and, in pure humanity, he made him a viſit. The man briefly informed him, that he had been tried and convicted of felony, and was in daily expectation of the arrival of the warrant for his execution; 'but,' ſaid he, 'I have 200l. and you are a man of character, and had the court-intereſt when you ſtood for chamberlain: I ſhould therefore hope, it is in your power to get me off.'—Mr. Selwin was ſtruck with ſo ſtrange an application, and, to account for it, aſked, if there were any alleviating circumſtances in his caſe: the man peeviſhly anſwered—No,—but that he had enquired into the hiſtory of the place where he was, and could not find that any one who had two hundred pounds, was ever hanged.—Mr. Selwin told him, it was out of his power to help him, and bade him farewell,—'which,' added he, 'he did; for he found means to eſcape puniſhment.'

The diſpoſition of the law, and of magiſtrates, to be merciful to offenders againſt it, leads me to remark, that in the people of this country there is a general propenſity to humanity; and that, notwithſtanding the cry againſt mercileſs creditors, urged

But Dodd's caſe was ſuch as excluded him from the benefit of all the above chances, excepting the laſt; and of that he laboured with all his might to avail himſelf. A petition to the throne for a pardon, was an expedient that naturally ſuggeſted itſelf, but, as it required the utmoſt powers of eloquence to palliate his offence, he found means to intereſt Dr. Johnſon in his behalf, and eaſily procured from him two of the moſt energetic compoſitions of the kind ever ſeen, the one a petition from himſelf to the king, the other, a like addreſs from his wife to the queen, ſeverally conceived in the terms following:

'To the King's moſt excellent Majeſty.

'SIR,

'It is moſt humbly repreſented to your majeſty 'by William Dodd, the unhappy convict now lying 'under ſentence of death:

urged in favour of inſolvent acts, ſuch a character is hardly now to be found. I have, in my time, diſcharged great numbers of debtors under ſuch acts, and cannot recollect five inſtances where their diſcharge has been oppoſed. And, with regard to bankrupts and other inſolvents, I am warranted by long experience and much obſervation to ſay, that in caſes where their inability to pay their debts has ariſen from misfortune, the readineſs of creditors to accept a ſmall compoſition, and give them freſh credit, has been ſuch as I could not contemplate without calling to remembrance the parable in the Goſpel of the lord that was moved with compaſſion, and forgave his debtor. And, with reſpect to injuries, ſuch as perſonal aſſaults or indignities, an Engliſhman never ſeeks farther than to humble his adverſary: when that is done, forgiveneſs and ſhaking hands follow of courſe. If, therefore, it be true, that humanity is the offspring of courage, we have not far to ſeek for the ſource of Britiſh bravery.

'That

'That William Dodd, acknowledging the juſtice of 'the ſentence denounced againſt him, has no hope or 'refuge but in your majeſty's clemency.

'That though to recollect or mention the uſefulneſs of his life, or the efficacy of his miniſtry, muſt 'overwhelm him, in his preſent condition, with 'ſhame and ſorrow; he yet humbly hopes, that his 'paſt labours will not wholly be forgotten; and that 'the zeal with which he has exhorted others to a good 'life, though it does not extenuate his crime, may 'mitigate his puniſhment.

'That debaſed as he is by ignominy, and diſtreſſed 'as he is by poverty, ſcorned by the world, and deteſted by himſelf, deprived of all external comforts, 'and afflicted by conſciouſneſs of guilt, he can derive 'no hopes of longer life, but that of repairing the 'injury he has done to mankind, by exhibiting an 'example of ſhame and ſubmiſſion, and of expiating 'his ſins by prayer and penitence.

'That for this end, he humbly implores from the 'clemency of your majeſty, the continuance of a life 'legally forfeited; and of the days which, by your 'gracious compaſſion, he may yet live, no one ſhall 'paſs without a prayer, that your majeſty, after a 'long life of happineſs and honour, may ſtand, at 'the day of final judgment, among the merciful that 'obtain mercy.

'So fervently prays the moſt diſtreſſed and wretched 'of your majeſty's ſubjects,

'WILLIAM DODD.'

'To the Queen's moſt excellent Majeſty.

'MADAM,

'It is moſt humbly repreſented by Mary Dodd, 'wife of Dr. William Dodd, now lying in priſon 'under ſentence of death:

'That ſhe has been the wife of this unhappy man 'more than twenty-ſeven years, and has lived with 'him in the greateſt happineſs of conjugal union, and 'the higheſt ſtate of conjugal confidence.

'That ſhe has been a conſtant witneſs of his un-'wearied endeavours for public good, and his labo-'rious attendance on charitable inſtitutions. Many 'are the families whom his care has delivered from 'want; many are the hearts which he has freed from 'pain, and the faces which he has cleared from ſor-'row.

'That, therefore, ſhe moſt humbly throws herſelf 'at the feet of the queen, earneſtly intreating, that 'the petition of a diſtreſſed wife aſking mercy for a 'huſband, may be conſidered as naturally ſoliciting 'the compaſſion of her majeſty; and that, when her 'wiſdom has compared the offender's good actions 'with his crime, ſhe will be pleaſed to repreſent his 'caſe to our moſt gracious ſovereign, in ſuch terms 'as may diſpoſe him to mitigate the rigour of the 'law.

'So prays your majeſty's moſt dutiful ſubject and 'ſupplicant,

'MARY DODD.'

To the firſt of theſe petitions, but not without difficulty, Mrs. Dodd firſt got the hands of the jury that found the bill againſt her huſband, and after that, as it is ſuppoſed, of the jury that tried him. It was then circulated about, and all the while the cry for mercy was kept up in the news-papers, and the merits and ſufferings of the unfortunate divine were ſo artfully repreſented by paragraphs therein inſerted, that, in a ſhort ſpace of time, no fewer than twenty-three thouſand names were ſubſcribed thereto. Moreover, letters and addreſſes, written alſo by Johnſon, imploring their interpoſition, were ſent to the miniſter and other great perſons.

While the two petitions were in ſuſpence, the following obſervations, penned by Dr. Johnſon, appeared in the public papers:

'Yeſterday was preſented to the ſecretary of ſtate, 'by earl Percy, a petition in favour of Dr. Dodd, 'ſigned by twenty-three thouſand hands. On this 'occaſion it is natural to conſider,

'That, in all countries, penal laws have been re-'laxed, as particular reaſons have emerged.

'That a life eminently beneficent, a ſingle action 'eminently good, or even the power of being uſeful 'to the public, have been ſufficient to protect the 'life of a delinquent.

'That no arbiter of life and death has ever been 'cenſured for granting the life of a criminal to honeſt 'and powerful ſolicitation.

'That the man for whom a nation petitions, muſt 'be preſumed to have merit uncommon, in kind or 'in degree; for, however the mode of collecting

'ſubſcriptions, or the right of judgment exerciſed 'by the ſubſcribers, may be open to diſpute, it is, 'at leaſt, plain, that ſomething is done for this man 'that was never done for any other; and govern-'ment, which muſt proceed upon general views, 'may rationally conclude, that this man is ſomething 'better than other offenders have been, or has done 'ſomething more than others have done.

'That though the people cannot judge of the ad-'miniſtration of juſtice ſo well as their governors, yet 'their voice has always been regarded.

'That this is a caſe in which the petitioners de-'termine againſt their own intereſt; thoſe for whoſe 'protection the law was made, intreat its relaxation, 'and our governors cannot be charged with the 'conſequences which the people bring upon them-'ſelves.

'That as this is a caſe without example, it will 'probably be without conſequences, and many ages 'will elapſe before ſuch a crime is again committed 'by ſuch a man.

'That though life be ſpared, juſtice may be ſa-'tisfied with ruin, impriſonment, exile, infamy, and 'penury.

'That if the people now commit an error, their 'error is on the part of mercy: and that perhaps 'hiſtory cannot ſhew a time, in which the life of a 'criminal, guilty of nothing above fraud, was re-'fuſed to the cry of nations, to the joint ſupplica-'tion of three and twenty thouſand petitioners.'

While Dodd was waiting the event of the petitions, his wife and friends were not idle. Dr. Johnſon told me,

me, that they had offered Akerman, the keeper of Newgate, a thouſand pounds to let him eſcape; and that failing, that a number of them, with bank-notes in their pockets, to the amount of five hundred pounds, had watched for a whole evening, about the door of the priſon, for an opportunity of corrupting the turnkey, but could not ſucceed in the attempt.

When all hopes of a favourable anſwer to either of the petitions were at an end, Johnſon drew up for publication a ſmall collection of what are called 'Occaſional papers by the late William Dodd, 'L. L. D.' and five hundred copies thereof were printed for the benefit of his wife; but ſhe, conſcious that they were not of her huſband's writing, would not conſent to their being publiſhed; and the whole number, except two or three copies, was ſuppreſſed. The laſt office he performed for this wretched man, was the compoſing a ſermon, which he delivered in the chapel of Newgate, on Friday 6th June, 1777, and which was ſoon after publiſhed, with the title of 'The 'Convict's Addreſs.'

Johnſon had never ſeen the face of Dodd in his life. His wife had found her way to him during his confinement, and had intereſted him ſo ſtrongly in his behalf, that he lamented his fate, as he would have done that of an intimate friend under the like circumſtances. He was deeply concerned at the failure of the petitions; and aſked me at the time, if the requeſt contained in them was not ſuch an one as ought to have been granted to the prayer of twenty-three thouſand ſubjects? to which I anſwered, that the ſubſcription of popular petitions was a thing of

courſe, and that, therefore, the difference between twenty and twenty thouſand names was inconſiderable. He further cenſured the clergy very ſeverely, for not interpoſing in his behalf, and ſaid, that their inactivity aroſe from a paltry fear of being reproached with partiality towards one of their own order.

Here I cannot forbear remarking, an inconſiſtency in the opinion of Johnſon reſpecting the caſe of Dodd. He aſſiſted in the ſolicitations for his pardon, yet, in his private judgment, he thought him unworthy of it, having been known to ſay, that had he been the adviſer of the king, he ſhould have told him that, in pardoning Dodd, his juſtice, in remitting the Perreaus to their ſentence, would have been called in queſtion.

About this time, Dr. Johnſon changed his dwelling in Johnſon's court, for a ſomewhat larger in Bolt court, Fleet ſtreet, where he commenced an intimacy with the landlord of it, a very worthy and ſenſible man, ſome time ſince deceaſed, Mr. Edmund Allen the printer. Behind it was a garden, which he took delight in watering; a room on the ground-floor was aſſigned to Mrs. Williams, and the whole of the two pair of ſtairs floor was made a repoſitory for his books; one of the rooms thereon being his ſtudy. Here, in the intervals of his reſidence at Streatham, he received the viſits of his friends, and, to the moſt intimate of them, ſometimes gave, not inelegant dinners.

Being at eaſe in his circumſtances, and free from that ſolicitude which had embittered the former part of his life, he ſunk into indolence, till his faculties ſeemed to be impaired: deafneſs grew upon him; long intervals of mental abſence interrupted his converſation,

verſation, and it was difficult to engage his attention to any ſubject. His friends, from theſe ſymptoms, concluded, that his lamp was emitting its laſt rays, but the lapſe of a ſhort period gave them ample proofs to the contrary.

In the year 1774, the long-agitated queſtion of literary property received a final deciſion, on an appeal to the ſupreme judicature of this kingdom, whereby it was, in effect, declared, that ſuch property was merely ideal, and exiſted only in imagination *. The immediate conſequence of this determination

* In the arguments in this caſe, on a ſpecial verdict, in the court of King's-bench, it was admitted, that precedents, directly to the point, were wanting: it was, therefore, determined by lord Manſfield and two other judges, Yates alone diſſenting, upon the ſimple principles of natural juſtice and moral fitneſs, that the right contended for did exiſt; and that theſe are part of the law of England is aſſerted, and has ever been underſtood. Vide Doddridge's 'Engliſh Lawyer,' page 154 to 161, and 'Doctor and Student' paſſim. Nevertheleſs, in the argument of an appeal to the lords from a decree of the court of Chancery in 1774, it was contended, that, in new caſes, the judges had no right to decide by the rules of moral fitneſs and equitable right, but were to be ruled by precedents alone. An objection the more remarkable, as coming from men who are known to deſpiſe the ſtudy of antiquity, to have ridiculed the peruſal of records, and to have treated with the utmoſt ſcorn, what they are pleaſed to term, black-letter learning. If this be law, and every judicial determination needs a precedent, we are left at a loſs to account for thoſe early and original determinations for which no precedent could be found, but which are now become fundamental principles of law: ſuch, for inſtance, as that a bare right of action is not aſſignable; that, of things fixed to the freehold, felony cannot be committed; that a releaſe to one treſpaſſer is a releaſe to all; and numberleſs others. Lord Hardwicke has been known to direct a ſearch for precedents, and, when none could be found, to ſay—'I will make one.'

was, a ſcramble of the loweſt and leaſt principled of the bookſellers, for the jewel thus caſt among them. Regardleſs of that obvious rule of natural juſtice, which gives the poſſeſſor a right to what he has purchaſed, they printed books, for the copy-right whereof very large ſums had been paid by bookſellers, who, for their liberality to authors, and the encouragement by them given to voluminous works, had been looked on and acknowledged as the patrons of literature. Among theſe numerous depredators was one, who projected an edition of the Engliſh poets, which, by advertiſements conceived in the moſt hyperbolical terms, and calculated to impoſe upon the credulity of the ignorant, was obtruded on the public.

The bookſellers, againſt whoſe intereſt this intended publication was likely to operate, derived their right to the works of many of the poets, included in the above deſign by meſne aſſignments, from thoſe ever reſpectable men the Tonſons, who had purchaſed them of their authors. To check this attempt, therefore, they determined themſelves to publiſh an edition of the poets, and, in order to obtain for it a preference, engaged Johnſon to write the lives of all, or the chief of them; and he undertook and executed the taſk with great alacrity, and in a manner that argued not the leaſt decline of his faculties.

When Johnſon had determined on this work, he was to ſeek for the beſt mode of executing it. On a hint from a literary lady of his acquaintance and mine, he adopted, for his outline, that form in which the counteſs D'Aunois has drawn up the memoirs of the French

French poets, in her 'Recueils des plus belles pieces 'des Poëtes François;' and the foundation of his work was, the lives of the dramatic poets by Langbaine, and the lives of the poets at large by Winſtanley, and that more modern one than either, their lives by Giles Jacob, whoſe information, in many inſtances, was communicated by the perſons themſelves. Nevertheleſs, the materials which Johnſon had to work on were very ſcanty. He was never a ſedulous enquirer after facts or anecdotes, nor very accurate in fixing dates: Oldys was the man of all others the beſt qualified for ſuch an employment; Johnſon's talent was diſquiſition; a genius like his, diſdained ſo ſervile a labour. Whenever, therefore, he found himſelf at a loſs for ſuch intelligence as his work required, he availed himſelf of the induſtry of a friend or two, who took pleaſure in furniſhing him with ſuch particulars as are to be found in the lives of Addiſon, Prior, Pope, Swift, Gay, and a few others, whoſe perſons, habits, and characters, ſome yet, or very lately living, were able, either from their own knowledge, or authenticated tradition, to deſcribe.

The book came abroad in the year 1778, in ten ſmall volumes, and no work of Johnſon has been more celebrated. It has been ſaid to contain the ſoundeſt principles of criticiſm, and the moſt judicious examen of the effuſions of poetic genius, that any country, not excepting France, has to ſhew; and ſo much of this is true, that, in our peruſal of it, we find our curioſity, as to facts and circumſtances, abſorbed in the contemplation of thoſe penetrating reflections and nice diſcriminations, which are far the greater part of it.

It is, nevertheleſs, to be queſtioned, whether Johnſon poſſeſſed all the qualities of a critic, one of which ſeems to be a truly poetic faculty. This may ſeem a ſtrange doubt, of one who has transfuſed the ſpirit of one of Mr. Pope's fineſt poems into one written by himſelf in a dead language, and, in two inſtances, nearly equalled the greateſt of the Roman ſatyriſts. By the poetic faculty, I mean that power which is the reſult of a mind ſtored with beautiful images, and which exerts itſelf in creation and deſcription: of this Johnſon was totally devoid. His organs, imperfect as they were, could convey to his imagination but little of that intelligence which forms the poetic character, and produces that enthuſiaſm which diſtinguiſhes it. If we try his ability by Shakeſpeare's famous deſcription;

'The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
'Doth glance from Heaven to earth, from earth
'to Heaven;
'And, as imagination bodies forth
'The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
'Turns them to ſhapes, and gives to airy nothing
'A local habitation, and a name:'

he will appear deficient. We know that he wanted this power; that he had no eye that could be ſaid to roll or glance, and, therefore, that all his conceptions of the grandeur and magnificence of external objects, of beautiful ſcenes, and extenſive proſpects, were derived from the reports of others, and conſequently were but the feeble impreſſions of their archetypes; ſo

ſo that it may be queſtioned whether, either waking or ſleeping,

'Such ſights as youthful poets dream,'

were ever preſented to his view.

This defect in his imaginative faculty, may well account for the frigid commendation which Johnſon beſtows on Thomſon, and other of the deſcriptive poets, on many fine paſſages in Dryden, and on the Henry and Emma of Prior. Moral ſentiments, and verſification, ſeem chiefly to have engaged his attention, and on theſe his criticiſms are accurate, but ſevere, and not always impartial. His avowed fondneſs for rhyme is one of the blemiſhes in his judgment: he entertained it in oppoſition to Milton, and cheriſhed it through the whole of his life; and it led him into many errors. Dryden had his doubts about the preference of rhyme to blank verſe; and I have heard Johnſon accuſe him for want of principle in this reſpect, and of veering about in his opinion on the ſubject. No ſuch imputation could faſten on himſelf.

That Johnſon had no ſenſe of the harmony of muſical ſounds, himſelf would frequently confeſs, but this defect left him not without the power of deriving pleaſure from metrical harmony, from that commixture of long and ſhort quantities, which the laws of proſody have reduced to rule, and from whence ariſes a delight in thoſe whoſe ear is unaffected by conſonance. The ſtrokes on the pulſatile inſtruments, the drum for inſtance, though they produce monotonous ſounds, have, if made by rule, mathematical ratios of duple and triple, with numberleſs fractions,

and admit of an infinite variety of combinations, which give pleaſure to the auditory faculty; but of this Johnſon ſeems alſo to have been inſenſible. That his own numbers are ſo harmonious as, in general, we find them, muſt have been the effect of his ſedulous attention to the writings of Dryden and Pope, and the diſcovery of ſome ſecret in their verſification, of which he was able to avail himſelf.

If Johnſon be to be numbered among thoſe poets in whom the powers of underſtanding, more than thoſe of the imagination, are ſeen to exiſt, we have a reaſon for that coldneſs and inſenſibility which he ſo often diſcovers in the courſe of this work; and, when we recollect that he profeſſed himſelf to be a faſtidious critic, we are not to wonder, that he is ſometimes backward in beſtowing applauſe on paſſages that ſeem to merit it. In ſhort, he was a ſcrupulous eſtimator of beauties and blemiſhes, and poſſeſſed a ſpirit of criticiſm, which, by long exerciſe, may be ſaid to have become mechanical. So nicely has he balanced the one againſt the other, that, in ſome inſtances, he has made neither ſcale preponderate, and, in others, by conſidering the failings of his authors as poſitive demerit, he has left ſome celebrated names in a ſtate of reputation below mediocrity. A ſpirit like this, had before actuated him in his preface to Shakeſpeare, in which, by a kind of arithmetical proceſs, ſubtracting from his excellencies his failings, he has endeavoured to ſink him in the opinion of his numerous admirers, and to perſuade us, againſt reaſon and our own feelings, that the former are annihilated by the latter.

His

His cenſures of the writings of lord Lyttelton, and of Gray, gave great offence to the friends of each: the firſt coſt him the friendſhip of a lady, whoſe remarks on the genius of Shakeſpeare have raiſed her to a degree of eminence among the female writers of this time; and the ſuppoſed injury done by him to the memory of Gray, is reſented by the whole univerſity of Cambridge. The character of Swift he has ſtigmatized with the brand of pride and ſelfiſhneſs, ſo deeply impreſſed, that the marks thereof ſeem indelible. In the praiſes of his wit, he does him no more than juſtice; of his moral qualities, he has made the moſt; and of his learning, of which Swift poſſeſſed but a very ſmall portion, he has ſaid nothing. Few can be offended at Johnſon's account of this man, whoſe arrogance and malevolence were a reproach to human nature; and in whoſe voluminous writings little is to be found, that can conduce to the improvement or benefit of mankind, or, indeed, that it beſeemed a clergyman to publiſh.

In his own judgment of the lives of the poets, Johnſon gave the preference to that of Cowley, as containing a nicer inveſtigation and diſcrimination of the characteriſtics of wit, than is elſewhere to be found. Others have aſſigned to Dryden's life the pre-eminence. Upon the whole, it is a finely written, and an entertaining book, and is likely to be coeval with the memory of the beſt of the writers whom it celebrates.

To the life of Pope, he thought proper to adjoin a criticiſm on the epitaphs of that poet, written ſome years before, and inſerted in a monthly pamphlet, intitled 'The Viſitor,' in which he detects a great number

number of faulty paſſages, and puerile ſentiments. An attempt of the like kind had formerly been made by Concanen, one of the Dunciad heroes, in a paper called 'The Speculatiſt,' firſt publiſhed in one of the periodical papers of the day, and afterwards collected into an octavo volume; but it went no farther than to a cenſure of the inſcription on Craggs's monument in Weſtminſter abbey, which, by the way, was never intended for an epitaph, but is an eulogium on that ſtateſman, taken from Pope's 'Epiſtle to Mr. Addiſon, occaſioned by his dialogues on medals.' Johnſon has noticed this, and apologizing for ſome faults in it, imputes them, in his ſtrong manner of expreſſion, to the violence with which the lines were torn from the original. The whole of Concanen's criticiſm turns upon the length of the inſcription, which is ſix lines, and, by a ſtrange blunder of Pope, is recommended as a motto for the ſuppoſed medal to be ſtruck in commemoration of his ſervices, and gives occaſion to the critic to aſk——'Is this a motto for a medal or a mill-'ſtone.'

But Johnſon, who never examined the writings of any author, but with an eye the moſt penetrating, has taken a nearer view of theſe compoſitions of Pope, as they appear in his works, and diſcovered, that ſcarce any one of them, notwithſtanding the beauty of verſification which they diſplay, will bear the teſt of ſound criticiſm. For his remarks on them, this is no fit place: the inquiſitive reader is therefore referred for the peruſal of them to the life of Pope, among the poets; and, for farther information on the ſubject of monumental inſcriptions, to 'An Eſſay on Epitaphs,' among his philological tracts.

All

All that is neceſſary to remark on his examen of Pope's epitaphs is, that, in one inſtance, it was productive of a ſingular event, the total eraſure of that epitaph on Sir Godfrey Kneller's monument in Weſtminſter abbey, which had long been objected to, as being a very indifferent imitation of cardinal Bembo's famous diſtich on Raphael; and it ſeems that the author thought ſo, for, in the later editions of his works, he has omitted it.

'Ille hic eſt Raphaël, timuit quo ſoſpite vinci
'Rerum magna parens, & moriente mori.'

After he had finiſhed the lives of the poets, Johnſon, contemplating the ſtrength of his mental powers, was ſo little ſenſible of any decay in them, that he entertained a deſign of giving to the world a tranſlation of that voluminous work of Thuanus, the hiſtory of his own times, an undertaking ſurely too laborious for one who had nearly completed the age of man, and whoſe mind was generally occupied by ſubjects of greater importance than any that relate to this world. But, in this eſtimate of his abilities, he ſoon found himſelf deceived. Sleepleſs nights, and the uſe of opium, which he took in large quantities, alternately depreſſed and raiſed his ſpirits, and rendered him an incompetent judge of his own powers, ſo that, had he purſued his reſolution, he would, doubtleſs, have ſunk under the burden of ſo great a labour.

It may farther be queſtioned whether, upon trial, he would not have found himſelf unequal to the taſk of transfuſing into an Engliſh verſion the ſpirit of

of his author. Johnſon's talent was original thinking, and though he was ever able to expreſs his own ſentiments in nervous language, he did not always ſucceed in his attempts to familiariſe the ſenſe of others: his tranſlation of Pere Lobo's voyage has little to recommend it but the ſubject-matter. Among his papers was found, a tranſlation from Salluſt of the 'Bellum Catilinarium,' ſo flatly and inſipidly rendered, that the ſuffering it to appear would have been an indeligible diſgrace to his memory.

We muſt now take our leave of Johnſon as an author, and view him as a man worn out with literary labour and diſeaſe, contemplating his diſſolution, and exerting all his powers to reſiſt that conſtitutional malady which now, more than ever, oppreſſed him. To divert himſelf from a train of thinking which often involved him in a labyrinth of doubts and difficulties touching a future ſtate of exiſtence, he ſolicited the frequent viſits of his friends and acquaintance, the moſt diſcerning of whom could not but ſee, that the fabric of his mind was tottering; and, to allay thoſe ſcruples and terrors which haunted him in his vacant hours, he betook himſelf to the reading of books of practical divinity, and, among the reſt, the writings of Baxter, and others of the old puritan and non-conforming divines. Of Baxter, he entertained a very high opinion, and often ſpoke of him to me as a man of great parts, profound learning, and exemplary piety: he ſaid, of the office for the communion drawn up by him and produced at the Savoy-conference, that it was one of the fineſt compoſitions of the ritual kind he had ever ſeen *.

* It is printed at the end of the firſt volume of Dr. Calamy's abridgement of Mr. Baxter's Hiſtory of his Life and Times.

It

It was a circumſtance to be wondered at, that a high-churchman, as Johnſon ever profeſſed himſelf to be, ſhould be driven to ſeek for ſpiritual comfort in the writings of ſectaries; men whom he affected, as well to condemn for their ignorance, as to hate for their principles; but, as his acquaintance with the world, and with the writings of ſuch men as Watts, Foſter, Lardner, and Lowman, increaſed, theſe prejudices were greatly ſoftened. Of the early puritans, he thought their want of general learning was atoned for by their ſkill in the Scriptures, and the holineſs of their lives *; and, to juſtify his opinion of them,

* Yet have there been among them a few, as eminent for their learning as their piety, and, in juſtice to their memory, I will mention two of this character: the one was Gataker, well known for his excellent edition of the Meditations of the emperor Marcus Antoninus, and his Commentary on the prophecy of Jeremiah; the other, a ſomewhat earlier writer, old Mr. Dod, ſurnamed the Decalogiſt, an exquiſite Hebrew ſcholar, a man of primitive ſanctity, and a paſſive non-conforming divine. His memory is not quite extinct among the diſſenters of the preſent age, for I remember, in my youth, to have ſeen, in the window of an old bookſeller of that denomination, a printed broad ſheet, with a wooden portrait at the top thereof, intitled 'Mr. Dod's ſayings,' being a ſtring of religious aphoriſms, intended to be ſtuck up in the houſes of poor perſons. In Fuller's Worthies, page 181, and alſo in his Church-hiſtory, book xi. page 219, are ſome particulars that mark his character, and in the latter, page 220, the following note of his ſimplicity. 'He was but coarſely uſed by the cavaliers, and when the ſoldiers, who came to plunder him, brought down the ſheets out of his chamber, into the room where he ſat by the fire-ſide, he, in their abſence to ſearch for more, took one pair, and clapped them under his cuſhion whereon he ſat, much pleaſing himſelf, after their departure, that he had, as he ſaid, plundered the plunderers, and, by a lawful felony, had ſaved ſo much of his own to himſelf. 'He died the ſame year with archbiſhop Laud, 1646, and with him,' this author adds, 'the old puritan ſeemed to expire.'

and

and their writings, he once cited to me a ſaying of Howell in one of his letters, that to make a man a complete Chriſtian, he muſt have the works of a Papiſt, the words of a Puritan, and the faith of a Proteſtant *. At times when he was moſt diſtreſſed, I recommended to him the peruſal of biſhop Taylor's 'Rules and 'Exerciſes of holy Living and Dying,' and alſo, his 'Ductor Dubitantium,' a book abounding in erudition, and moſt aptly ſuiting his circumſtances. Of the former, though he placed the author at the head of all the divines that have ſucceeded the fathers, he ſaid, that in the reading thereof, he had found little more than he brought himſelf; and, at the mention of the latter, he ſeemed to ſhrink. His Greek teſtament was generally within his reach, and he red much in it. He was competently ſkilled in the writings of the fathers, yet was he more converſant with thoſe of the great Engliſh church-men, namely, Hooker, Uſher, Mede, Hammond, Sanderſon, Hall, and others of that claſs. Dr. Henry More, of Cambridge, he did not much affect: he was a platoniſt, and, in Johnſon's opinion, a viſionary. He would frequently cite from him, and laugh at, a paſſage to this effect:—'At the conſummation of all things, it 'ſhall come to paſs, that eternity ſhall ſhake hands 'with opacity.' He had never, till I mentioned

* Howell's Letters, book ii. letter 11. The author muſt here be underſtood to mean proteſtants of the eſtabliſhed church, for the puritans are alſo proteſtants. This dictum carries the more weight with it, as it comes from a man whoſe ſentiments, reſpecting ſectaries, may be inferred from the following paſſage in another of his letters:—'If I hate any, it is thoſe ſchiſmatics that puzzle the 'ſweet peace of the church; ſo that I could be content to ſee an 'Anabaptiſt go to Hell on a Browniſt's back.' Book i. letter 32.

him,

him, heard of Dr. Thomas Jackſon, of Corpus Chriſti college, Oxon. Upon my recommendation of his works, in three folio volumes, he made me a promiſe to buy and ſtudy them, which he lived not to perform. He was, for ſome time, pleaſed with Kempis's, or rather John Gerſon's tract 'De Imi-'tatione Chriſti,' but at length laid it aſide, ſaying, that the main deſign of it was to promote monaſtic piety, and inculcate eccleſiaſtical obedience. One ſentiment therein, he, however, greatly applauded, and I find it adopted by biſhop Taylor, who gives it in the following words:—'It is no 'great matter to live lovingly with good-natured, 'with humble and meek perſons; but he that can 'do ſo with the froward, with the wilful, and the 'ignorant, with the peeviſh and perverſe, he only 'hath true charity. Always remembering, that our 'true ſolid peace, the peace of God, conſiſts rather 'in compliance with others, than in being complied 'with; in ſuffering and forbearing, rather than in 'contention and victory *.'

In the courſe of theſe ſtudies, he exerciſed his powers of eloquence, in the compoſition of forms of devotion, adapted to his circumſtances and the ſtate of his mind at different times. Of theſe, a ſpecimen has lately been given to the public. He alſo tranſlated into Latin many of the collects in our liturgy. This was a practice which he took up in his early years, and continued through his life, as he did alſo the noting down the particular occurrences of each day thereof, but in a looſe and deſultory way,

* Polemical and moral diſcourſes, folio, 1657, page 25.

in

in books of various forms, and in no regular or continued ſucceſſion.

He ſeemed to acquieſce in that famous ſaying of John Valdeſſo, which induced the emperor Charles the fifth to reſign his crown, and betake himſelf to religious retirement; 'Oportet inter vitæ negotia, et 'diem mortis, ſpatium aliquod intercedere *,' nevertheleſs, he was but an ill huſband of his time. He was, throughout his life, making reſolutions to riſe at eight, no very early hour, and breaking them. The viſits of idle, and ſome of them very worthleſs perſons, were never unwelcome to him; and though they interrupted him in his ſtudies and meditations, yet, as they gave him opportunities of diſcourſe, and furniſhed him with intelligence, he ſtrove rather to protract than ſhorten or diſcountenance them; and, when abroad, ſuch was the laxity of his mind, that he conſented to the doing of many things, otherwiſe indifferent, for the avowed reaſon that they would drive on time.

Of his viſitors at this time myſelf was one, and having known the ſtate of his mind at different periods, and his habitual dread of inſanity, I was greatly deſirous of calming his mind, and rendering him ſuſceptible of the many enjoyments of which I thought him then in poſſeſſion, namely, a permanent income, tolerable health, a high degree of reputation for his moral qualities and literary exertions, by which latter he had made a whole country ſenſible of its obligation to him, and, laſtly, that he had as

* It is fit, that between the buſineſs of life, and the day of death, ſome ſpace ſhould intervene.

few

few enemies as a man of his eminence could expect. On one day in particular, when I was ſuggeſting to him theſe and the like reflections, he gave thanks to Almighty God, but added, that notwithſtanding all the above benefits, the proſpect of death, which was now at no great diſtance from him, was become terrible, and that he could not think of it but with great pain and trouble of mind.

I was very much ſurpriſed and ſhocked at ſuch a declaration from ſuch a man, and told him, that from my long acquaintance with him, I conceived his life to have been an uniform courſe of virtue, that he had ever ſhewn a deep ſenſe of, and zeal for, religion, and that, both by his example and his writings, he had recommended the practice of it: that he had not reſted, as many do, in the exerciſe of common honeſty, avoiding the groſſer enormities, yet rejecting thoſe advantages that reſult from the belief of divine revelation, but that he had, by prayer, and other exerciſes of devotion, cultivated in his mind the ſeeds of goodneſs, and was become habitually pious. Theſe ſuggeſtions made little impreſſion on him: he lamented the indolence in which he had ſpent his life, talked of ſecret tranſgreſſions, and ſeemed deſirous of telling me more to that purpoſe than I was willing to hear.

From theſe perturbations of mind, he had, however, at times, relief. Upon a viſit, that I made him ſome months after, I found him much altered in his ſentiments. He ſaid that, having reflected on the tranſactions of his life, and acknowledged his ſins before God, he felt within himſelf a confidence in his

mercy, and that, truſting to the merits of his Redeemer, his mind was now in a ſtate of perfect tranquillity.

In theſe diſcourſes, he would frequently mention, with great energy and encomiums, the penitence of the man who aſſumed the name, and by that I muſt call him, of George Pſalmanaazar, a Frenchman, but who pretended to be a native of the iſland of Formoſa, and a convert from paganiſm to Chriſtianity, and, as ſuch, received baptiſm. By the help of his great learning and endowments, he eluded all attempts to detect his impoſtures, but, in his more advanced age, became a ſincere penitent, and, without any other motive than a ſenſe of his ſin, publiſhed a confeſſion of them, and begged the pardon of mankind in terms the moſt humble and affecting. The remainder of his life was exemplary, and he died in 1763. The habitation of this perſon was in Ironmonger row, Old ſtreet, Middleſex, in the neighbourhood whereof he was ſo well known and eſteemed, that, as Dr. Hawkeſworth once told me, ſcarce any perſon, even children, paſſed him without ſhewing him the uſual ſigns of reſpect. He was one of the writers of the Univerſal Hiſtory, and, by his intercourſe with the booksellers it was, as I conceive, that Johnſon became acquainted with him *.

I mention the above particulars, as well to corroborate thoſe teſtimonies of Johnſon's piety already extant, as to refute the objections of many infidels, who, deſirous of having him thought to be of their party,

* For a more particular account of this extraordinary man, ſee 'the new and general Biographical Dictionary,' in twelve volumes, 8vo. 1774, in articulo.

endeavoured

endeavoured to make it believed, that he was a mere moraliſt, and that, when writing on religious ſubjects, he accommodated himſelf to the notions of the vulgar: and alſo, becauſe a certain female ſceptic, of his acquaintance, was once heard to ſay, that ſhe was ſure Dr. Johnſon was too great a philoſopher to be a believer.

From this digreſſion, which I mean as an introduction to certain particulars of his behaviour in his laſt illneſs, hereafter related, I proceed to the future events of his life. In the year 1781, death put an end to the friendſhip that, for ſome years, had ſubſiſted between him and Mr. Thrale, but gave birth to a relation that ſeemed to be but a continuation of it, viz. that of an executor, the duties of which office involved in it the management of an immenſe trade, the diſpoſal of a large fortune, and the intereſts of children riſing to maturity. For the trouble it might create him, Mr. Thrale bequeathed to him, as he did to each of his other executors, a legacy of two hundred pounds.

Dr. Johnſon was not enough a man of the world to be capable alone of ſo important a truſt. Indeed, it required, for the execution of it, ſomewhat like a board, a kind of ſtanding council, adapted, by the ſeveral qualifications of the individuals that compoſed it, to all emergencies. Mr. Thrale wiſely foreſaw this, and aſſociated with Johnſon three other perſons, men of great experience in buſineſs, and of approved worth and integrity. It was eaſy to ſee, as Johnſon was unſkilled in both money and commercial tranſactions, that Mr. Thrale's view, in conſtituting him one of his executors, could only be, that, by his philoſophical

prudence and ſagacity, of which himſelf had, in ſome inſtances, found the benefit*, he might give a general direction to the motions of ſo vaſt a machine as they had to conduct. Perhaps he might alſo think, that the celebrity of Johnſon's character would give a luſtre to that conſtellation, in which he had thought proper to place him. This may be called vanity, but it ſeems to be of the ſame kind with that which induced Mr. Pope to appoint Mr. Murray, now earl of Mansfield, one of the executors of his will.

No ſooner had this truſt devolved on him, than he applied to me for advice. He had never been an executor before, and was at a loſs in the ſteps to be taken. I told him the firſt was proving the will, a term that he underſtood not. I explained it to him, as alſo the oath that would be tendered to him, faithfully to execute it, to adminiſter the teſtator's effects according to law, and to render a true account thereof when required. I told him that in this act he would be joined by the other executors, whom, as they were all men of buſineſs, he would do well to follow.

* A few years before Mr. Thrale's death, an emulation aroſe among the brewers to exceed each other in the magnitude of their veſſels for keeping beer to a certain age, probably taking the hint from the great tun at Heidelburg. One of that trade, I think it was Mr. Whitbread, had made one that would hold ſome thouſand barrels, the thought whereof troubled Mr. Thrale, and made him repeat, from Plutarch, a ſaying of Themiſtocles, 'The trophies of 'Miltiades hinder my ſleeping;' Johnſon, by ſober reaſoning, ted him, and prevented his expending a large ſum on what be productive of no real benefit to him or his trade.

Johnſon had all his life long been uſed to lead, to direct, and inſtruct, and did not much reliſh the thoughts of following men, who, in all the ſituations he could conceive, would have looked up to him: he therefore, as he afterwards confeſſed to me, began to form theories and viſionary projects, adapted as well to the continuation and extenſion of the trade, which, be it remembered, was brewing, as the diſpoſal of it; but in this, as he alſo acknowledged, he found himſelf at a loſs. The other executors, after reflecting on the difficulty of conducting ſo large an undertaking, the diſagreeableneſs of an office that would render them, in effect, tax-gatherers, as all of that trade are, and place them in a ſituation between the public and the revenue, determined to make ſale of the whole, and blew up Johnſon's ſchemes for their commencing brewers, into the air. In the carrying this reſolution into act, the executors had a great difficulty to encounter: Mr. Thrale's trade had been improving for two generations, and was become of ſuch an enormous magnitude, as nothing but an aggregate of ſeveral fortunes was equal to; a circumſtance, which could not but affect the intrinſic value of the object, and increaſe the difficulty of finding purchaſers: of things indiviſible expoſed to ſale, an eſtimate may be formed, till their value riſes to a certain amount; but, after that, a conſiderable abatement from their intrinſic worth muſt be made, to meet the circumſtance of a paucity of purchaſers. This was the caſe in the ſale of Pitt's diamond, which, in the ratio by which jewels are valued, was computed to be worth 225,000 l. but, becauſe

only a very few perſons were able to purchaſe it, was ſold to the laſt king of France for little more than 67,000l.

This difficulty, great as it was, Mr. Thrale's executors found the way to ſurmount: they commenced a negociation with ſome perſons of worth and character, which, being conducted on both ſides with fairneſs and candour, terminated in a conveyance of the trade, with all its appendages, for which the conſideration was, an hundred and thirty-five thouſand pounds. Of this arduous tranſaction, Johnſon was little more than a ſpectator, and, when called upon to ratify it, he readily acquieſced. There only remained for him to do juſtice to the memory of him, whom he could not but conſider as both his friend and benefactor, and this he did, by an exerciſe of his talent, in the following monumental inſcription:

Hic conditur quod reliquum eſt
HENRICI THRALE,
Qui res ſeu civiles, ſeu domeſticas, ita egit,
Ut vitam illi longiorem multi optarent;
Ita ſacras,
Ut quam brevem eſſet habiturus preſcire videretur;
Simplex, apertus, ſibique ſemper ſimilis,
Nihil oſtentavit, aut arte fictum, aut cura
Elaboratum.
In ſenatu, regi, patriæque,
Fideliter ſtuduit;
Vulgi obſtrepentis contemptor animoſus:
Domi inter mille mercaturæ negotia,
Literarum elegantiam minimè neglexit,
Amicis, quocunque modo laborantibus,
Conciliis,

Conciliis, auctoritate, muneribus adfuit.
Inter familiares, comites, convivas, hoſpites,
Tam facili fuit morum ſuavitate,
Ut omnium animos ad ſe alliceret;
Tam felici ſermonis libertate,
Ut nulli adulatus, omnibus placeret.
Natus 1724. Ob. 1781.
Conſortes tumuli habet Rodolphum patrem,
Strenuum fortemque virum, et Henricum,
Filium unicum, quem ſpei parentum
Mors inopina decennem
Præripuit.
Ita
Domus felix et opulenta, quam erexit
Avus, auxitque pater, cum nepote decidit.
Abi viator,
Et vicibus rerum humanarum perſpectis,
Eternitatem cogita.

The death of Mr. Thrale diſſolved the friendſhip between him and Johnſon; but it abated not in the latter, that care for the intereſts of thoſe whom his friend had left behind him, which he thought himſelf bound to cheriſh, as a living principle of gratitude. The favours he had received from Mr. Thrale, were to be repaid by the exerciſe of kind offices towards his relict and her children, and theſe, circumſtanced as Johnſon was, could only be prudent councils, friendly admonition to the one, and preceptive inſtruction to the others, both which he was ever ready to interpoſe. Nevertheleſs, it was obſerved by myſelf, and other of Johnſon's friends, that, ſoon after the deceaſe of Mr. Thrale, his viſits to Streatham be-

came leſs and leſs frequent, and that he ſtudiouſly avoided the mention of the place or family*.

Having now no calls, and, as I believe, very little temptation, to become a ſojourner, or even a gueſt, in the habitation of his departed friend, he had leiſure to indulge himſelf in excurſions to the city of his nativity, as alſo to Oxford; for both which places he ever entertained an enthuſiaſtic affection. In the former, he was kindly received, and reſpectfully treated, by Mrs. Lucy Porter, the daughter, by her former huſband, of his deceaſed wife, and in the latter, by the reverend Dr. Adams, who had been his tutor at Pembroke college, and is now the head of that ſeminary. While he was thus reſident in the univerſity, he received daily proofs of the high eſtimation in which he was there held, by ſuch members of that body as were of the greateſt eminence for learning, or were any way diſtinguiſhed for their natural or acquired abilities.

Beſides the places above-mentioned, Johnſon had other ſummer-retreats, to which he was ever welcome, the ſeats of his friends in the country. At one of theſe, in the year 1782, he was alarmed by a tumour, by ſurgeons termed a ſarcocele, that, as it increaſed, gave him great pain, and, at length, hurried him to town, with a reſolution to ſubmit, if it ſhould be thought neceſſary, to a dreadful chirurgical operation; but, on his arrival, one leſs ſevere reſtored him to a

* It ſeems that between him and the widow there was a formal taking of leave, for I find in his diary the following note: '1783, 'April 5th, I took leave of Mrs. Thrale. I was much moved. 'I had ſome expoſtulations with her. She ſaid that ſhe was like-'wiſe affected. I commended the Thrales with great good will to 'God; may my petitions have been heard!'

Rate

ſtate of perfect eaſe in the part affected. But he had diſorders of another kind to ſtruggle with: he had frequent fits of pain which indicated the paſſage of a gall-ſtone, and he now felt the preſſure of an aſthma, a conſtitutional diſeaſe with him, from which he had formerly been relieved by copious bleedings, but his advanced age forbade the repetition of them.

In the beginning of the year 1782, death deprived him of his old friend and companion; he who had, for near forty years, had the care of his health, and had attended him almoſt conſtantly every morning, to enquire after the ſtate of his body, and fill out his tea, the mute, the officious, and the humble Mr. Levett. Of this diſaſtrous event, as ſoon as it happened, Johnſon ſent to his friend, Dr. Lawrence, the following account:

'SIR, Jan. 17, 1782.

'Our old friend Mr. Levett, who was laſt night 'eminently chearful, died this morning. The man 'who lay in the ſame room, hearing an uncommon 'noiſe, got up, and tried to make him ſpeak, but 'without effect. He then called Mr. Holder the 'apothecary, who, though when he came he thought 'him dead, opened a vein, but could draw no blood. 'So has ended the long life of a very uſeful and very 'blameleſs man.

'I am, Sir,

'Your moſt humble ſervant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

I find

I find in one of Johnſon's diaries the following note: 'January 20, Sunday. Robert Levett was buried 'in the church-yard of Bridewell, between one and 'two in the afternoon. He died on Thurſday 17, 'about ſeven in the morning, by an inſtantaneous 'death. He was an old and faithful friend. I have 'known him from about 46. Commendari.——May 'God have had mercy on him. May he have mercy 'on me!'

The grief which the loſs of friends occaſioned Johnſon, ſeems to have been a frequent ſtimulative with him to compoſition. His ſenſe of Levett's worth he expreſſed in the following lines, which may, perhaps, contribute, more than any one circumſtance in his character, to keep the memory of his exiſtence alive:

1

'Condemn'd to hope's deluſive mine,
'As on we toil from day to day,
'By ſudden blaſt, or ſlow decline,
'Our ſocial comforts drop away.

2

'Well tried through many a varying year,
'See Levett to the grave deſcend;
'Officious, innocent, ſincere,
'Of every friendleſs name the friend.

3

'Yet ſtill he fills affection's eye,
'Obſcurely wiſe, and coarſely kind,
'Nor, letter'd ignorance, deny
'Thy praiſe to merit unrefin'd.

'When

4.

'When fainting nature call'd for aid,
'And hov'ring death prepar'd the blow,
'The vig'rous remedy diſplay'd,
'The power of art, without the ſhow.

5

'In mis'ry's darkeſt caverns known,
'His uſeful care was ever nigh;
'Where hopeleſs anguiſh pour'd his groan,
'And lonely want retir'd to die.

6

'No ſummons mock'd by chill delay;
'No petty gain diſdain'd by pride:
'The modeſt wants of ev'ry day,
'The toil of ev'ry day ſupply'd.

7

'His virtues walk'd their narrow round,
'Nor made a pauſe, nor left a void;
'And ſure the eternal Maſter found
'The ſingle talent well employ'd.

8

'The buſy day, the peaceful night,
'Unfelt, uncounted, glided by:
'His frame was firm, his pow'rs were bright,
'Though now his eightieth year was nigh.

'Then

9

'Then with no throb of fiery pain,
'No cold gradations of decay,
'Death broke at once the vital chain,
'And freed his ſoul the neareſt way.'

About the middle of June 1783, his conſtitution ſuſtained a ſeverer ſhock than it had ever before felt: this was a ſtroke of the palſy, ſo very ſudden and ſevere, that it awakened him out of a ſound ſleep, and rendered him, for a ſhort time, ſpeechleſs. As it had not affected his intellectual powers, he, in that cumbent poſture to which he was confined, attempted to repeat, firſt in Engliſh, then in Latin, and afterwards in Greek, the Lord's Prayer, but ſucceeded in only the laſt effort, immediately after which, finding himſelf again bereft of the power of ſpeech, he rang for his ſervant, and making ſigns for pen, ink, and paper, wrote and ſent the following note to his friend and next-door neighbour, Mr. Allen the printer.

'Dear Sir,

'It hath pleaſed Almighty God this morning to 'deprive me of the powers of ſpeech; and, as I do 'not know but that it may be his farther good plea-'ſure to deprive me ſoon of my ſenſes, I requeſt 'you will, on the receipt of this note, come to me, 'and act for me, as the exigencies of my caſe may 'require.

'I am, ſincerely,
'Your's,
'S. JOHNSON.'

Mr.

Mr. Allen immediately roſe to his aſſiſtance, and, in the morning, diſpatched a meſſage to Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brockleſby, who, in a few days, ſo far relieved him, that his ſpeech became, to a good degree, articulate, and, till his organs began to tire, he was able to hold converſation. By the ſkill and attention of theſe two worthy perſons, he was, at length, reſtored to ſuch a degree of health that, on the 27th of the ſame month, he was able to water his garden, and had no remaining ſymptoms of diſeaſe, excepting that his legs were obſerved to be ſwoln, and he had ſome preſages of an hydropic affection. Theſe gave him ſome concern, and induced him to note, more particularly than he had formerly done *, the variations of the ſtate of his health.

But bodily afflictions were not the only trials he had to undergo. He had been a mourner for many friends, and was now in danger of loſing one, who had not only cheared him in his ſolitude, and helped him to paſs with comfort thoſe hours which, otherwiſe, would have been irkſome to him, but had relieved him from domeſtic cares, regulated and watched over the expences of his houſe, and kept at a diſtance ſome of thoſe neceſſitous viſitants, towards whom his bounty, though it had ſeldom wrought any good, had often been exerciſed.

* Of his being ſeized with the palſy, I find in his diary the following note:

'June 16. I went to bed, and, as I conceive, about 3 in the 'morning, I had a ſtroke of the palſy.

'17. I ſent for Dr. Heberden and Dr. Brockleſby. God 'bleſs them.

'25. Dr. Heberden took leave.'

This

This perſon was Mrs. Williams, whoſe calamitous hiſtory is related among the events recorded in the foregoing pages. She had for ſome months been declining, and during the doctor's late illneſs was confined to her bed. The reſtoration of his health made it neceſſary for him to retire into the country; but, before his departure, he compoſed and made uſe of the following energetic prayer.

'Almighty God, who, in thy late viſitation, haſt 'ſhewn mercy to me, and now ſendeſt to my com-'panion diſeaſe and decay, grant me grace ſo to 'employ the life which thou haſt prolonged, and 'the faculties which thou haſt preſerved, and ſo 'to receive the admonition, which the ſickneſs of 'my friend, by thy appointment, gives me, that I 'may be conſtant in all holy duties, and be re-'ceived at laſt to eternal happineſs.

'Permit, O Lord, thy unworthy creature to offer 'up this prayer for Anna Williams, now languiſhing 'upon her bed, and about to recommend herſelf to 'thy infinite mercy. O God, who deſireſt not the 'death of a ſinner, look down with mercy upon her: 'forgive her ſins, and ſtrengthen her faith. Be 'merciful, O Father of mercy, to her and to me: 'guide us by thy holy ſpirit through the remaining 'part of life; ſupport us in the hour of death, and 'pardon us in the day of judgment, for Jeſus Chriſt's 'ſake. Amen.'

During his abſence from London, viz. on the ſixth day of September 1783, Mrs. Williams was releaſed from all her cares and troubles by an eaſy death, for which ſhe was well prepared. The laſt offices were performed for her by thoſe of her friends who were

about her in the time of her illneſs, and had adminiſtered to her all the aſſiſtance in their power.

At his return to London, Johnſon found himſelf in a forlorn and helpleſs condition: his habitual melancholy had now a real ſubject to work on, and repreſented his houſe as a dreary manſion. Solitude was ever ungrateful to him, and the want of a companion, with whom he might paſs his evening hours, often drove him to ſeek relief in the converſation of perſons in all reſpects his inferiors. To talk much, and to be well attended to, was, throughout his life, his chief delight: his vein of diſcourſe, which has often enough been deſcribed, was calculated to attract the applauſe, and even admiration, of ſmall circles; to him, therefore, a confraternity of perſons, aſſembled for the purpoſe of free communication, or, in other words, a club, could not but be a ſource of pleaſure, and he now projected one, which will hereafter be deſcribed. In every aſſociation of this kind, he was ſure, unleſs by conceſſion, to preſide, and, ex cathedra, to diſcuſs the ſubjects of enquiry and debate.

The death of Mr. Thrale, and Johnſon's eſtrangement from the dwelling and family of this his valued friend, have already been mentioned: it remains to ſay of this event, that it was not followed by a total oblivion, on the part of his relict, of the intimacy that had ſubſiſted between him and her huſband, it appearing, that an intercourſe by letters was ſtill kept up between them. It was, nevertheleſs, eaſy to diſcover by his converſation, that he no longer looked on himſelf as a welcome gueſt at Streatham, and that he did but ill brook the change in his courſe of life that he now experienced. He had, for near twenty years, par-

ticipated

ticipated in moſt of thoſe enjoyments that make wealth and affluence deſirable; had partaken, in common with their owners, of the delights of a villa, and the convenience of an equipage; and had been entertained with a variety of amuſements and occupations. In ſhort, during the whole of that period, his life had been as happy as it had been in the power of ſuch perſons to make it.

That this celebrated friendſhip ſubſiſted ſo long as it did, was a ſubject of wonder to moſt of Johnſon's intimates, for ſuch were his habits of living, that he was by no means a deſirable inmate. His unmanly thirſt for tea made him very troubleſome. At Streatham, he would ſuffer the miſtreſs of the houſe to ſit up and make it for him, till two or three hours after midnight. When retired to reſt, he indulged himſelf in the dangerous practice of reading in bed. It was a very hard matter to get him decently dreſſed by dinner-time, even when ſelect companies were invited; and no one could be ſure, that in his table-converſation with ſtrangers, he would not, by contradiction, or the general aſperity of his behaviour, offend them.

Theſe irregularities were not only borne with by Mr. Thrale, but he ſeemed to think them amply atoned for by the honour he derived from ſuch a gueſt as no table in the three kingdoms could produce; but, he dying, it was not likely that the ſame ſentiments and opinions ſhould deſcend to thoſe of his family who were left behind. Such a friendly connection and correſpondence as I have juſt mentioned, continued, however, between Johnſon and the widow, till it was interrupted by an event that will ſhortly be related.

I have

I have in his diary met with ſundry notes, ſignifying that, while he was at Streatham, he endeavoured, by reading, to acquire a knowledge of the Dutch language, but that his progreſs in the ſtudy thereof was very ſlow.

It has been already related that, being ſeized with a paralyſis about the month of June 1783, he was ſo far recovered therefrom, as to entertain a hope, that he had nearly worn out all his diſorders. 'What 'a man am I!' ſaid he to me, in the month of November following, 'who have got the better of three 'diſeaſes, the palſy, the gout, and the aſthma, and 'can now enjoy the converſation of my friends, with-'out the interruptions of weakneſs or pain!'——To theſe flattering teſtimonies I muſt add, that in this ſeeming ſpring-tide of his health and ſpirits, he wrote me the following note:

'Dear SIR,

'As Mr. Ryland was talking with me of old 'friends and paſt times, we warmed ourſelves into 'a wiſh, that all who remained of the club ſhould 'meet and dine at the houſe which once was Horſe-'man's, in Ivy lane. I have undertaken to ſolicit 'you, and therefore deſire you to tell on what day 'next week you can conveniently meet your old 'friends.

'I am, Sir,

'Your moſt humble ſervant,

'SAM. JOHNSON.'

'Bolt court, Nov. 22, 1783.'

Our intended meeting was prevented by a circumſtance, which the following note will explain:

'Dear SIR,

'In perambulating Ivy lane, Mr. Ryland found 'neither our landlord Horſeman, nor his ſucceſſor. 'The old houſe is ſhut up, and he liked not the 'appearance of any near it: he, therefore, beſpoke 'our dinner at the Queen's Arms, in St. Paul's 'church yard, where, at half an hour after three, 'your company will be deſired to-day, by thoſe 'who remain of our former ſociety.

'Your humble ſervant,

'Dec. 3.' 'SAM. JOHNSON.

With this invitation I chearfully complied, and met, at the time and place appointed, all who could be muſtered of our ſociety, namely, Johnſon, Mr. Ryland, and Mr. Payne of the bank. When we were collected, the thought that we were ſo few, occaſioned ſome melancholy reflections, and I could not but compare our meeting, at ſuch an advanced period of life as it was to us all, to that of the four old men in the 'Senile Colloquium' of Eraſmus. We dined, and in the evening regaled with coffee. At ten, we broke up, much to the regret of Johnſon, who propoſed ſtaying; but finding us inclined to ſeparate, he left us, with a ſigh that ſeemed to come from his heart, lamenting that he was retiring to ſolitude and chearleſs meditation.

Johnſon had propoſed a meeting, like this, once a month, and we had one more; but, the time approaching for a third, he began to feel a return of ſome of his complaints, and ſignified a wiſh, that we would dine with him at his own houſe; and, accordingly, we met there, and were very chearfully entertained by him.

A few

A few days after, he ſent for me, and informed me, that he had diſcovered in himſelf the ſymptoms of a dropſy, and, indeed, his very much increaſed bulk, and the ſwoln appearance of his legs, ſeemed to indicate no leſs. He told me, that he was deſirous of making a will, and requeſted me to be one of his executors: upon my conſenting to take on me the office, he gave me to underſtand, that he meant to make a proviſion for his ſervant Frank, of about 70l. a year for life, and concerted with me a plan for inveſting a ſum ſufficient for the purpoſe: at the ſame time he opened to me the ſtate of his circumſtances, and the amount of what he had to diſpoſe of.

In a viſit, which I made him in a few days, in conſequence of a very preſſing requeſt to ſee me, I found him labouring under great dejection of mind. He bade me draw near him, and ſaid, he wanted to enter into a ſerious converſation with me; and, upon my expreſſing a willingneſs to join in it, he, with a look that cut me to the heart, told me, that he had the proſpect of death before him, and that he dreaded to meet his Saviour. I could not but be aſtoniſhed at ſuch a declaration, and adviſed him, as I had done once before, to reflect on the courſe of his life, and the ſervices he had rendered to the cauſe of religion and virtue, as well by his example, as his writings; to which he anſwered, that he had written as a philoſopher, but had not lived like one. In the eſtimation of his offences, he reaſoned thus—'Every man knows his 'own ſins, and alſo, what grace he has reſiſted. But, 'to thoſe of others, and the circumſtances under which 'they were committed, he is a ſtranger: he is, there-'fore, to look on himſelf as the greateſt ſinner that

'he knows of*.' At the concluſion of this argument, which he ſtrongly enforced, he uttered this paſſionate exclamation,—'Shall I, who have been a teacher of 'others, myſelf be a caſtaway?'

Much to the ſame purpoſe paſſed between us in this and other converſations that I had with him, in all which I could not but wonder, as much at the freedom with which he opened his mind, and the compunction he ſeemed to feel for the errors of his paſt life, as I did, at his making choice of me for his confeſſor, knowing full well how meanly qualified I was for ſuch an office.

It was on a Thurſday that I had this converſation with him; and here, let not the ſupercilious lip of ſcorn protrude itſelf, while I relate that, in the courſe thereof, he declared his intention to devote the whole of the next day to faſting, humiliation, and ſuch other devotional exerciſes, as became a man in his ſituation. On the Saturday following, I made him a viſit, and, upon entering his room, obſerved in his countenance ſuch a ſerenity, as indicated that ſome remarkable criſis of his diſorder had produced a change in his feelings. He told me, that, purſuant to the reſolution he had mentioned to me, he had ſpent the preceding day in an abſtraction from all worldly concerns; that, to prevent interruption, he had, in the morning, ordered Frank not to admit any one to him, and, the better to enforce the charge, had added theſe awful words, 'For your maſter is preparing himſelf 'to die.' He then mentioned to me, that, in the

* I find the above ſentiment in Law's Serious call to a devout and holy life, a book which Johnſon was very converſant with, and often commended.

courſe

courſe of this exerciſe, he found himſelf relieved from that diſorder which had been growing on him, and was become very oppreſſing, the dropſy, by a gradual evacuation of water to the amount of twenty pints, a like inſtance whereof he had never before experienced, and aſked me what I thought of it.

I was well aware of the lengths that ſuperſtition and enthuſiaſm will lead men, and how ready ſome are to attribute favourable events to ſupernatural cauſes, and ſaid, that it might ſavour of preſumption to ſay that, in this inſtance, God had wrought a miracle; yet, as divines recognize certain diſpenſations of his providence, recorded in the Scripture by the denomination of returns of prayer, and his omnipotence is now the ſame as ever, I thought it would be little leſs than criminal, to aſcribe his late relief to cauſes merely natural, and, that the ſafer opinion was, that he had not in vain humbled himſelf before his Maker. He ſeemed to acquieſce in all that I ſaid on this important ſubject, and, ſeveral times, while I was diſcourſing with him, cried out, 'It is wonderful, very wonderful!'

His zeal for religion, as manifeſted in his writings and converſation, and the accounts extant that atteſt his piety, have induced the enemies to his memory to tax him with ſuperſtition. To that charge, I oppoſe his behaviour on this occaſion, and leave it to the judgment of ſober and rational perſons, whether ſuch an unexpected event, as that above-mentioned, would not have prompted a really ſuperſtitious man, to ſome more paſſionate exclamation, than that it was wonderful *.

He

* Doubtleſs there are men who look upon all religious exerciſe

He had no ſooner experienced the eaſe and comfort which followed from the remarkable event abovementioned, than he began to entertain a hope, that he had got the better of that diſeaſe which moſt oppreſſed him, and that length of days might yet be his portion; he, therefore, ſought for a relief from that ſolitude, to which the loſs of Mrs. Williams and others of his domeſtic companions, ſeemed to have doomed him; and, in the ſame ſpirit that induced him to attempt the revival of the Ivy lane club, ſet about the eſtabliſhment of another. I was not made privy to this his intention, but, all circumſtances conſidered, it was no matter of ſurpriſe to me when I heard, as I did from a friend of mine, that the great Dr. Johnſon had, in the month of December 1783, formed a ſixpenny club, at an ale-houſe in Eſſex-ſtreet, and that, though ſome of the members thereof were perſons of note, ſtrangers, under reſtrictions, for three pence each night, might, three nights in a week, hear him talk, and partake of his converſation. I ſoon afterwards learned from the doctor, the nature of, as alſo the motives to this inſtitution, which, as to him, was novel, in this reſpect, that, as the preſidency

as ſuperſtition, and upon prayer and other acts of devotion, as evidences of a weak mind. Theſe ſay, that reaſon is a ſufficient rule of action, and that God needs not to be ſupplicated, nor requires our thanks. Of this claſs of infidels I take Annet to have been one: he who wrote againſt the miracles, and was ſome years ago convicted of blaſphemy, and ſentenced to impriſonment. The wife of Jackſon, the bookſeller, in Clare court, Drury lane, a man well known by the collectors of old books and pamphlets, once told me, that this man would often call in at their ſhop, and if he happened to ſee a bible lying on the counter, would intreat her to take it away, for that he could not bear the ſight of it.

paſſed

paſſed in rotation, he was oftner excluded from, than entitled to enjoy, that pre-eminence which, at all times, and in all convivial aſſemblies, was conſidered as his right.

The more intimate of Johnſon's friends looked on this eſtabliſhment, both as a ſorry expedient to kill time, and a degradation of thoſe powers which had adminiſtered delight to circles, compoſed of perſons, of both ſexes, diſtinguiſhed as well by their rank, as by their talents for polite converſation. It was a mortification to them, to aſſociate in idea the clink of the tankard, with moral diſquiſition and literary inveſtigation; and many of them were led to queſtion whether that pleaſure could be very great, which he had rendered ſo cheap: they, however, concealed their ſentiments, and, from motives of mere compaſſion, ſuffered him to enjoy a comfort, which was now become almoſt the only one of which he was capable; and this he did for the ſhort ſpace of about ten months, when the increaſe of his complaints obliged him to forego it.

I have now brought him to the ſeventy-fifth year of his age, and the laſt of his life, in which two remarkable events occurred, the one whereof gave him great uneaſineſs, and the other, though much talked of, little or none. The time I am ſpeaking of, is the year 1784, by about the middle whereof, he was, to appearance, ſo well recovered, that both himſelf and his friends hoped, that he had ſome years to live. He had recovered from the paralytic ſtroke of the laſt year, to ſuch a degree, that, ſaving a little difficulty in his articulation, he had no remains of it: he had alſo undergone a ſlight fit of the gout, and

conquered an oppreſſion on his lungs, ſo as to be able, as himſelf told me, to run up the whole ſtair-caſe of the Royal Academy, on the day of the annual dinner there. In ſhort, to ſuch a degree of health was he reſtored, that he forgot all his complaints: he reſumed ſitting to Opie for his picture, which had been begun the year before, but, I believe, was never finiſhed, and accepted an invitation to the houſe of a friend, at Aſhbourn in Derbyſhire, propoſing to ſtay there till towards the end of the ſummer, and, in his return, to viſit Mrs. Porter, his daughter-in-law, and others of his friends, at Lichfield.

A few weeks before his ſetting out, he was made uneaſy by a report, that the widow of his friend Mr. Thrale was about to diſpoſe of herſelf in marriage to a foreigner, a ſinger by profeſſion, and with him to quit the kingdom. Upon this occaſion he took the alarm, and to prevent a degradation of herſelf, and, what as executor of her huſband was more his concern, the deſertion of her children, wrote to her, ſhe then being at Bath, a letter, a ſpurious copy whereof, beginning 'If you are not already ignominiouſly 'married,' is inſerted in the Gentleman's Magazine for December 1784. That this letter is ſpurious, as to the language, I have Johnſon's own authority for ſaying; but, in reſpect of the ſentiments, he avowed it, in a declaration to me, that not a ſentence of it was his, but yet, that it was an *adumbration* of one that he wrote upon the occaſion. It may, therefore, be ſuſpected, that ſome one who had heard him repeat the contents of the letter, had given it to the public in the form in which it appeared.

What anſwer was returned to his friendly monition, I know

I know not, but it ſeems that it was ſucceeded by a letter of greater length, written, as it afterwards appeared, too late to do any good, in which he expreſſed an opinion, that the perſon to whom it was addreſſed had forfeited her fame. The anſwer to this I have ſeen: it is written from Bath, and contains an indignant vindication as well of her conduct as her fame, an inhibition of Johnſon from following her to Bath, and a farewell, concluding—'Till you have changed your 'opinion of —— let us converſe no more.'

In this tranſaction, Johnſon ſeemed to have forgotten the ſtory of the Epheſian Matron, related by Petronius, but was, by this time, convinced that, in his endeavours to prevent an attachment, which he foreſaw would be prejudicial to the intereſts of his friend's children, and fix an indelible diſgrace on their mother, who was about to abandon them and her country, he had been labouring to hedge in the cuckow. From the ſtyle of the letter, a concluſion was to be drawn, that baffled all the powers of reaſoning and perſuaſion:

'One argument ſhe ſumm'd up all in,
'The thing was done, and paſt recalling *;

which being the caſe, he contented himſelf with reflecting on what he had done to prevent that which he thought one of the greateſt evils that could befall the progeny of his friend, the alienation of the affections of their mother. He looked upon the deſertion of children by their parents, and the withdrawing from them that protection, that mental nutriment which, in their youth, they are capable of receiving, the expoſing them to the ſnares and temptations of

* Pope and Swift's Miſcellanies, 'Phyllis or the Progreſs of love.'

the

'that your lordſhip ſhould be told of it by Sir 'Joſhua Reynolds, as an event very uncertain, for, 'if I grew much better, I ſhould not be willing, if 'much worſe, I ſhould not be able, to migrate.—— 'Your lordſhip was firſt ſolicited without my know-'ledge; but, when I was told, that you were pleaſed 'to honour me with your patronage, I did not ex-'pect to hear of a refuſal; yet, as I have had no 'long time to brood hope, and have not rioted in 'imaginary opulence, this cold reception has been 'ſcarce a diſappointment; and, from your lordſhip's 'kindneſs, I have received a benefit, which only men 'like you are able to beſtow. I ſhall now live mihi 'carior, with a higher opinion of my own merit.

'I am, my lord,

'Your lordſhip's moſt obliged,

'Moſt grateful,

'And moſt humble ſervant,

'Sept. 1784. SAM. JOHNSON.'

An incorrect copy of the above letter, though of a private nature, found its way into the public papers* in this manner. It was given to Sir Joſhua Reynolds, unſealed, to be delivered to lord Thurlow. Sir Joſhua, looking upon it as a handſome teſtimony of gratitude, and, as it related to a tranſaction in which he had concerned himſelf, took a copy of it, and ſhewed it to a few of his friends. Among theſe, was a lady of quality, who, having heard it red, the next day deſired to be gratified with the peruſal of it at home: the uſe ſhe made of this favour was, the copying and ſending it to one of the news-papers,

* Among the corruptions in the printed copies, are the words, *you were pleased*, for *you were pleased*, and *rested* for *visited*.

whence

whence it was taken and inſerted in others, as alſo in the Gentleman's and many other Magazines. Johnſon, upon being told that it was in print, exclaimed in my hearing—'I am betrayed,'—but ſoon after forgot, as he was ever ready to do all real or ſuppoſed injuries, the error that made the publication poſſible.

Dr. Brockleſby was one of thoſe phyſicians who would not encourage Johnſon in a wiſh to viſit the continent; nevertheleſs, to conſole him for his late diſappointment, and that the ſuppoſed narrowneſs of his circumſtances might be no hindrance to ſuch a deſign, he made him a voluntary offer of 100l. a year, payable quarterly, towards his ſupport abroad, but could not prevail on him to accept it*.

* Actuated by a like ſpirit of beneficence, the ſame perſon, by his intereſt with his friends, and in conjunction with that chriſtian-like jew, Sampſon Gideon, procured a contribution, amounting to upwards of 100l. a year, for the ſupport, during the remaining years of his life, of old captain Coram, the original mover in the eſtabliſhment of the Foundling-hoſpital. Upon Dr. Brockleſby's applying to the good old man, to know whether his ſetting on foot a ſubſcription for his benefit would not offend him, he received this noble anſwer:——'I have not waſted 'the little wealth, of which I was formerly poſſeſſed, in ſelf-indul-'gence, or vain expences, and am not aſhamed to confeſs, that in 'this my old age I am poor.'——Upon the death of Coram, this penſion was continued to Leveridge, a worn-out ſinger at the theatres, who, at the age of ninety, had ſcarce any other proſpect than that of a pariſh ſubſiſtence.

Thoſe writers on morality, ſuch as Hobbes and Mandeville, who reſolve all beneficence into ſelf-love, would be hard put to it to reconcile ſuch acts as theſe with their tenets. They would ſay, that the motive to them was a deſire to get rid of thoſe ſenſations which the diſtreſſes of others are apt to excite, and, by conſequence, that the exertions of beneficence are ſelfiſh. Never conſidering that, before theſe ſenſations can ariſe, a man muſt be kindly affectioned to his fellow-creatures, and poſſeſs that benevolence which the objection ſuppoſes to be wanting.

His

His excurſion to Aſhbourn was leſs beneficial than he hoped it would be: his diſorders began to return, and he wanted company and amuſement. During his ſtay there, he compoſed ſundry prayers, adapted to the ſtate of his body and mind; and tranſlated from Horace, lib. IV. the ode, 'Diffugêre nives, redeunt 'jam gramina campis,' in the words following:

'The ſnow, diſſolv'd, no more is ſeen;
'The fields and woods, behold, are green;
'The changing year renews the plain;
'The rivers know their banks again;
'The ſprightly nymph and naked grace
'The mazy dance together trace:
'The changing year's ſucceſſive plan,
'Proclaims mortality to Man.
'Rough winter's blaſts to ſpring give way;
'Spring yields to ſummer's ſovereign ray;
'Then ſummer ſinks in autumn's reign;
'And winter chills the world again;
'Her loſſes ſoon the moon ſupplies,
'But wretched Man, when once he lies
'Where Priam and his ſons are laid,
'Is nought but aſhes and a ſhade.
'Who knows if Jove, who counts our ſcore,
'Will rouſe us in a morning more?
'What with your friend you nobly ſhare,
'At leaſt you reſcue from your heir.
'Not you, Torquatus, boaſt of Rome,
'When Minos once has fix'd your doom,
'Or eloquence, or ſplendid birth,
'Or virtue ſhall replace on earth:

'Hippolytus

'Hippolytus unjuſtly ſlain,
'Diana calls to life in vain;
'Nor can the might of Theſeus rend
'The chains of hell that hold his friend.'

Nov. 1784.

In his return to London, he ſtopped at Lichfield, and from thence wrote to me ſeveral letters, that ſerved but to prepare me for meeting him in a worſe ſtate of health than I had ever ſeen him in. The concluding paragraph of the laſt of them is as follows: 'I am relapſing into the dropſy very faſt, and ſhall 'make ſuch haſte to town that it will be uſeleſs to 'write to me; but when I come, let me have the 'benefit of your advice, and the conſolation of your 'company.' [dated Nov. 7, 1784.] After about a fortnight's ſtay there, he took his leave of that city, and of Mrs. Porter, whom he never afterwards ſaw, and arrived in town on the ſixteenth day of November.

After the declaration he had made of his intention to provide for his ſervant Frank, and before his going into the country, I had frequently preſſed him to make a will, and had gone ſo far as to make a draft of one, with blanks for the names of the executors and reſiduary legatee, and directing in what manner it was to be executed and atteſted; but he was exceedingly averſe to this buſineſs; and, while he was in Derbyſhire, I repeated my ſolicitations, for this purpoſe, by letters. When he arrived in town, he had done nothing in it, and, to what I formerly ſaid, I now added, that he had never mentioned to me the diſpoſal of the reſidue of his eſtate, which,

after

after the purchaſe of an annuity for Frank, I found would be ſomething conſiderable, and that he would do well to bequeath it to his relations. His anſwer was, 'I care not what becomes of the reſidue.'—— A few days after, it appeared that he had executed the draft, the blanks remaining, with all the ſolemnities of a real will. I could get him no farther, and thus, for ſome time, the matter reſted.

He had ſcarce arrived in town, before it was found to be too true, that he was relapſing into a dropſy; and farther, that he was at times grievouſly afflicted with an aſthma. Under an apprehenſion that his end was approaching, he enquired of Dr. Brockleſby, with great earneſtneſs indeed, how long he might probably live, but could obtain no other than unſatisfactory anſwers: and, at the ſame time, if I remember right, under a ſeeming great preſſure of mind, he thus addreſſed him, in the words of Shakeſpeare:

'Canſt thou not miniſter to a mind diſeas'd;
'Pluck from the memory a rooted ſorrow,
'Raze out the written troubles of the brain,
'And with ſome ſweet oblivious antidote,
'Cleanſe the full boſom of that perilous ſtuff,
'Which weighs upon the heart?'——

MACBETH.

To which the doctor, who was nearly as well red in the above author as himſelf, readily replied,

'—————— Therein the patient
'Muſt miniſter unto himſelf.'

Upon which Johnſon exclaimed—'Well applied:—'that's more than poetically true.'

He

He had, from the month of July in this year, marked the progreſs of his diſeaſes, in a journal which he intitled 'Ægri Ephemeris,' noting therein his many ſleepleſs nights by the words, Nox inſomnis. This he often contemplated, and, finding very little ground for hope that he had much longer to live, he ſet himſelf to prepare for his diſſolution, and betook himſelf to private prayer and the reading of Eraſmus on the New Teſtament, Dr. Clarke's ſermons, and ſuch other books as had a tendency to calm and comfort him.

In this ſtate of his body and mind, he ſeemed to be very anxious in the diſcharge of two offices that he had hitherto neglected to perform: one was, the communicating to the world the names of the perſons concerned in the compilation of the Univerſal Hiſtory; the other was, the reſcuing from oblivion the memory of his father and mother, and alſo, of his brother: the former of theſe he diſcharged, by delivering to Mr. Nichols the printer, in my preſence, a paper containing the information above-mentioned, and directions to depoſit it in the Britiſh muſeum. The other, by compoſing a memorial of his deceaſed parents and his brother, intended for their tomb-ſtone, which, whether it was ever inſcribed thereon or not, is extant in the Gentleman's Magazine for January 1785. The note aſcertaining the names of the compilers of the Univerſal Hiſtory, is inſerted in the Magazine for the preceding month. The monumental inſcription is as follows:

H. S. E.

MICHAEL JOHNSON,

Vir impavidus, conſtans, animoſus, periculorum immemor, laborum patientiſſimus; fiduciâ chriſtianâ, fortis,

fortis, ferviduſque, pater-familias apprimè ſtrenuus; bibliopola admodum peritus; mente et libris et negotiis exculta; animo ita firmo, ut, rebus adverſis diu conflictatus, nec ſibi nec ſuis defuerit: lingua ſic temperata, ut ei nihil quod aures, vel pias, vel caſtas læſiſſet, aut dolor, vel voluptas unquam expreſſerit.

Natus Cubleiæ, in agro Derbienſi, anno MDCLVI. obiit MDCCXXXI.

Appoſita eſt SARA, conjux,

Antiqua FORDORUM gente oriunda; quam domi ſedulam, foris paucis notam; nulli moleſtam, mentis acumine et judicii ſubtilitate præcellentem; aliis multum, ſibi parum indulgentem: Æternitati ſemper attentam, omne fere virtutis nomen commendavit.

Nata Nortoniæ Regis, in agro Varvicenſi, anno MDCLXIX; obiit MDCCLIX.

Cum NATHANAELE illorum filio, qui natus MDCCXII, cum vires, et animi, et corporis multa pollicerentur, anno MDCCXXXVII, vitam brevem piâ morte finivit.

He would alſo have written, in Latin verſe, an epitaph for Mr. Garrick, but found himſelf unequal to the taſk of original poetic compoſition in that language.

Nevertheleſs, he ſucceeded in an attempt to render into Latin metre, from the Greek Anthologia, ſundry of the epigrams therein contained, that had been omitted by other tranſlators, alledging as a reaſon, which he had found in Fabricius, that Henry Stephens, Buchanan, Grotius, and others, had paid a like tribute to

literature.

literature *. The performance of this taſk was the employment of his ſleepleſs nights, and, as he informed me, it afforded him great relief.

His complaints ſtill increaſing, I continued preſſing him to make a will, but he ſtill procraſtinated that buſineſs. On the twenty-ſeventh of November, in the morning, I went to his houſe, with a purpoſe ſtill farther to urge him not to give occaſion, by dying inteſtate, for litigation among his relations; but finding that he was gone to paſs the day with the reverend Mr. Strahan, at Iſlington, I followed him thither, and found there our old friend Mr. Ryland, and Mr. Hoole. Upon my ſitting down, he ſaid, that the proſpect of the change he was about to undergo, and the thought of meeting his Saviour, troubled him, but that he had hope that he would not reject him. I then began to diſcourſe with him about his will, and the proviſion for Frank, till he grew angry. He told me, that he had ſigned and ſealed the paper I left him;—but that, ſaid I, had blanks in it, which, as it ſeems, you have not filled up with the names of the executors.——'You ſhould have filled 'them up yourſelf,' anſwered he.——I replied, 'that ſuch an act would have looked as if I meant to prevent his choice of a fitter perſon.——'Sir,' ſaid he, 'theſe minor virtues are not to be exerciſed in 'matters of ſuch importance as this.'——At length, he ſaid, that on his return home, he would ſend for a clerk, and dictate a will to him.——You will then, ſaid I, be inops conſilii; rather do it now,

* To theſe may be added, the examples of Sir Thomas More and Lily the grammarian, both of whoſe tranſlations are publiſhed among Sir Thomas More's epigrams.

With Mr. Strahan's permiſſion, I will be his gueſt at dinner; and, if Mr. Hoole will pleaſe to hold the pen, I will, in a few words, make ſuch a diſpoſition of your eſtate as you ſhall direct.——To this he aſſented; but ſuch a paroxyſm of the aſthma ſeized him, as prevented our going on. As the fire burned up, he found himſelf relieved, and grew chearful. 'The 'fit,' ſaid he, 'was very ſharp; but I am now eaſy.' After I had dictated a few lines, I told him, that the ancient form of wills contained a profeſſion of the faith of the teſtator; and that, he being a man of eminence for learning and parts, it would afford an illuſtrious example, and well become him, to make ſuch an explicit declaration of his belief, as might obviate all ſuſpicions that he was any other than a Chriſtian*. He thanked me for the hint, and, calling for paper, wrote on a ſlip, that I had in my hand and gave him, the following words: 'I humbly com-'mit to the infinite and eternal goodneſs of Almighty 'God, my ſoul polluted with many ſins; but, as I 'hope, purified by repentance, and redeemed, as I 'truſt, by the death of Jeſus Chriſt;' and, returning it to me, ſaid, 'This I commit to your cuſtody.'

* After the Roman empire became Chriſtian, not only the teſtaments of dying men, but the imperial edicts, began with an invocation of the name of God, or of the holy and undivided Trinity. The inſtitutes of Juſtinian begin 'In nomine Domini 'noſtri Jeſu Chriſti;' and, till lately, the addreſs of grants and charters has been 'To all Chriſtian people.' Vide Sir Henry Spelman of antient Deeds and Charters, among his Engliſh works. A few years ago it was the uniform practice to begin wills with the words, 'In the name of God, amen;' and frequently to inſert therein a declaration of the teſtator's hope of pardon in the merits of his Saviour; but, in theſe more refined times, ſuch forms are deemed ſuperfluous.

Upon my calling on him for directions to proceed, he told me, that his father, in the courſe of his trade of a bookſeller, had become bankrupt, and that Mr. William Innys had aſſiſted him with money or credit to continue his buſineſs—'This,' ſaid he, 'I conſider 'as an obligation on me to be grateful to his deſcen- 'dants, and I therefore mean to give 200l. to his re- 'preſentative.'—He then meditated a deviſe of his houſe at Lichfield to the corporation of that city for a charitable uſe; but, it being freehold, he ſaid—'I 'cannot live a twelve-month, and the laſt ſtatute of 'mortmain* ſtands in the way: I muſt, therefore, 'think of ſome other diſpoſition of it.'——His next conſideration was, a proviſion for Frank, concerning the amount whereof I found he had been conſulting Dr. Brockleſby, to whom he had put this queſtion—'What would be a proper annuity to bequeath to a 'favourite ſervant?'—The doctor anſwered, that the circumſtances of the maſter were the trueſt meaſure, and that, in the caſe of a nobleman, 50l. a year was deemed an adequate reward for many years' faithful ſervice.——'Then, ſhall I,' ſaid Johnſon, 'be 'nobiliſſimus; for, I mean to leave Frank 70l. a 'year, and I deſire you to tell him ſo.'—And now, at the making of the will, a deviſe, equivalent to ſuch a proviſion, was therein inſerted. The reſidue of his eſtate and effects, which took in, though he intended it not, the houſe at Lichfield, he bequeathed to his executors, in truſt for a religious aſſociation, which it is needleſs to deſcribe.

* Viz. 9 Geo. 2. cap. 36, which enacts, that no lands, tenements, &c. ſhall be given to any bodies politic, unleſs by deed indented, made twelve months, at leaſt, before the death of the donor.

uttered the following moſt eloquent and energetic prayer:

'Almighty and moſt merciful Father, I am now, as 'to human eyes it ſeems, about to commemorate, for 'the laſt time, the death of thy ſon Jeſus Chriſt, 'our Saviour and Redeemer. Grant, O Lord, that 'my whole hope and confidence may be in his me-'rits and in thy mercy: forgive and accept my late 'converſion; enforce and accept my imperfect repen-'tance; make this commemoration of him available 'to the confirmation of my faith, the eſtabliſhment 'of my hope, and the enlargement of my charity; and 'make the death of thy ſon Jeſus effectual to my re-'demption. Have mercy upon me, and pardon the 'multitude of my offences. Bleſs my friends, have 'mercy upon all men. Support me by the grace of 'thy holy ſpirit in the days of weakneſs, and at the 'hour of death, and receive me, at my death, to ever-'laſting happineſs, for the ſake of Jeſus Chriſt.—'Amen.'

Upon riſing from his knees, after the office was concluded, he ſaid, that he dreaded to meet God in a ſtate of idiocy, or with opium in his head; and, that having now communicated with the effects of a doſe upon him, he doubted if his exertions were the genuine operations of his mind, and repeated from biſhop Taylor this ſentiment, 'That little, that has 'been omitted in health, can be done to any purpoſe 'in ſickneſs*.

6th.

* He very much admired, and often in the courſe of his illneſs recited, from the concluſion of old Iſaac Walton's life of biſhop Sanderſon, the following pathetic requeſt:

6th. I again viſited him. Before my departure, Dr. Brockleſby came in, and, taking him by the wriſt, Johnſon gave him a look of great contempt, and ridiculed the judging of his diſorder by the pulſe. He complained, that the ſarcocele had again made its appearance, and aſked, if a puncture would not relieve him, as it had done the year before: the doctor anſwered, that it might, but that his ſurgeon was the beſt judge of the effect of ſuch an operation. Johnſon, upon this, ſaid, 'How many men in a year 'die through the timidity of thoſe whom they con-'ſult for health! I want length of life, and you fear 'giving me pain, which I care not for.'

8th. I viſited him with Mr. Langton, and found him dictating to Mr. Strahan another will, the former being, as he had ſaid at the time of making it, a temporary one. On our entering the room, he ſaid, 'God 'bleſs you both.' I arrived juſt time enough to direct the execution, and alſo the atteſtation of it. After he had publiſhed it, he deſired Mr. Strahan to ſay the Lord's prayer, which he did, all of us joining. Johnſon, after it, uttered, extempore, a few pious ejaculations.

9th. I ſaw him in the evening, and found him dictating, to Mr. Strahan, a codicil to the will he had

'Thus this pattern of meekneſs and primitive innocence 'changed this for a better life:—'tis now too late to wiſh, 'that mine may be like his; for I am in the eighty-fifth year 'of my age, and God knows it hath not; but, I moſt humbly 'beſeech Almighty God, that my death may; and I do as earn-'eſtly beg, that, if any reader ſhall receive any ſatisfaction from 'this very plain, and, as true relation, he will be ſo charitable as 'to ſay, Amen.'

made the evening before. I aſſiſted them in it, and received from the teſtator a direction, to inſert a deviſe to his executors of the houſe at Lichfield, to be ſold for the benefit of certain of his relations, a bequeſt of ſundry pecuniary and ſpecific legacies, a proviſion for the annuity of 70l. for Francis, and, after all, a deviſe of all the reſt, reſidue, and remainder of his eſtate and effects, to his executors, in truſt for the ſaid Francis Barber, his executors and adminiſtrators; and, having dictated accordingly, Johnſon executed and publiſhed it as a codicil to his will *.

He was now ſo weak as to be unable to kneel, and lamented, that he muſt pray ſitting, but, with an effort, he placed himſelf on his knees, while Mr. Strahan repeated the Lord's Prayer. During the whole of the evening, he was much compoſed and reſigned. Being become very weak and helpleſs, it was

* How much ſoever I approve of the practice of rewarding the fidelity of ſervants, I cannot but think that, in teſtamentary diſpoſitions in their favour, ſome diſcretion ought to be exerciſed; and that, in ſcarce any inſtance they are to be preferred to thoſe who are allied to the teſtator either in blood or by affinity. Of the merits of this ſervant, a judgment may be formed from what I ſhall hereafter have occaſion to ſay of him. It was hinted to me many years ago, by his maſter, that he was a looſe fellow; and I learned from others, that, after an abſence from his ſervice of ſome years, he married. In his ſearch of a wife, he picked up one of thoſe creatures with whom, in the diſpoſal of themſelves, no contrariety of colour is an obſtacle. It is ſaid, that ſoon after his marriage, he became jealous, and, it may be ſuppoſed, that he continued ſo, till, by preſenting him firſt with one, and afterwards with another daughter, of her own colour, his wife put an end to all his doubts on that ſcore. Notwithſtanding which, Johnſon, in the exceſs of indiſcriminating benevolence, about a year before his death, took the wife and both the children, into his houſe, and made them a part of his family; and, by the codicil to his will, made a diſpoſition in his favour, to the amount in value of full fifteen hundred pounds.

through

thought neceſſary that a man ſhould watch with him all night; and one was found in the neighbourhood, who, for half a crown a night, undertook to ſit up with, and aſſiſt him. When the man had left the room, he, in the preſence and hearing of Mr. Strahan and Mr. Langton, aſked me, where I meant to bury him. I anſwered, doubtleſs, in Weſtminſter abbey: 'If,' ſaid he, 'my executors think it proper to 'mark the ſpot of my interment by a ſtone, let it be 'ſo placed as to protect my body from injury.' I aſſured him it ſhould be done. Before my departure, he deſired Mr. Langton to put into my hands, money to the amount of upwards of 100l. with a direction to keep it till called for.

10th. This day at noon I ſaw him again. He ſaid to me, that the male nurſe to whoſe care I had committed him, was unfit for the office. 'He is,' ſaid he, 'an idiot, as aukward as a turnſpit juſt put into the 'wheel, and as ſleepy as a dormouſe.' Mr. Cruikſhank came into the room, and, looking on his ſcarified leg, ſaw no ſign of a mortification.

11th. At noon, I found him dozing, and would not diſturb him.

12th. Saw him again; found him very weak, and, as he ſaid, unable to pray.

13th. At noon, I called at the houſe, but went not into his room, being told, that he was dozing. I was further informed by the ſervants, that his appetite was totally gone, and that he could take no ſuſtenance. At eight in the evening, of the ſame day, word was brought me by Mr. Saſtres, to whom, in his laſt moments, he uttered theſe words, 'Jam ſupriturus,' that, at a quarter paſt ſeven, he had, without a groan, or the leaſt ſign of pain or uneaſineſs, yielded his laſt breath.

At

At eleven, the ſame evening, Mr. Langton came to me, and, in an agony of mind, gave me to underſtand, that our friend had wounded himſelf in ſeveral parts of the body. I was ſhocked at the news; but, upon being told that he had not touched any vital part, was eaſily able to account for an action, which would elſe have given us the deepeſt concern. The fact was, that conceiving himſelf to be full of water, he had done that, which he had often ſolicited his medical aſſiſtants to do, made two or three inciſions in his lower limbs, vainly hoping for ſome relief from the flux that might follow.

Early the next morning, Frank came to me; and, being deſirous of knowing all the particulars of this tranſaction, I interrogated him very ſtrictly concerning it, and received from him anſwers to the following effect:

That, at eight in the morning of the preceding day, upon going into the bedchamber, his maſter, being in bed, ordered him to open a cabinet, and give him a drawer in it; that he did ſo, and that out of it his maſter took a caſe of lancets, and chooſing one of them, would have conveyed it into the bed, which Frank, and a young man that ſat up with him, ſeeing, they ſeized his hand, and intreated him not to do a raſh action: he ſaid he would not; but drawing his hand under the bed-clothes, they ſaw his arm move. Upon this, they turned down the clothes, and ſaw a great effuſion of blood, which ſoon ſtopped—That ſoon after, he got at a pair of ſciſſars that lay in a drawer by him, and plunged them deep in the calf of each leg—That immediately they ſent for Mr. Cruikſhank, and the apothecary, and they, or one of them, dreſſed the wounds—That he then fell into that dozing which carried

carried him off.—That it was conjectured he loſt eight or ten ounces of blood; and that this effuſion brought on the dozing, though his pulſe continued firm till three o'clock.

That this act was not done to haſten his end, but to diſcharge the water that he conceived to be in him, I have not the leaſt doubt. A dropſy was his diſeaſe; he looked upon himſelf as a bloated carcaſe; and, to attain the power of eaſy reſpiration, would have undergone any degree of temporary pain. He dreaded neither punctures nor inciſions, and, indeed, defied the trochar and the lancet: he had often reproached his phyſicians and ſurgeon with cowardice; and, when Mr. Cruikſhank ſcarified his leg, he cried out—'Deeper, deeper;—I will abide the conſequence: 'you are afraid of your reputation, but that is no-'thing to me.'——To thoſe about him, he ſaid,—'You all pretend to love me, but you do not love 'me ſo well as I myſelf do.'

I have been thus minute in recording the particulars of his laſt moments, becauſe I wiſhed to attract attention to the conduct of this great man, under the moſt trying circumſtances human nature is ſubject to. Many perſons have appeared poſſeſſed of more ſerenity of mind in this awful ſcene; ſome have remained unmoved at the diſſolution of the vital union; and, it may be deemed a diſcouragement from the ſevere practice of religion, that Dr. Johnſon, whoſe whole life was a preparation for his death, and a conflict with natural infirmity, was diſturbed with terror at the proſpect of the grave. Let not this relax the circumſpection of any one. It is true, that natural firmneſs of ſpirit, or the confidence

confidence of hope, may buoy up the mind to the laſt; but, however heroic an undaunted death may appear, it is not what we ſhould pray for. As Johnſon lived the life of the righteous, his end was that of a Chriſtian: he ſtrictly fulfilled the injunction of the apoſtle, to work out his ſalvation with fear and trembling; and, though his doubts and ſcruples were certainly very diſtreſſing to himſelf, they give his friends a pious hope, that he, who added to almoſt all the virtues of Chriſtianity, that religious humility which its great Teacher inculcated, will, in the fullneſs of time, receive the reward promiſed to a patient continuance in well-doing.

A few days after his departure, Dr. Brocklesby and Mr. Cruikſhank, who, with great aſſiduity and humanity, (and I muſt add, generoſity, for neither they, nor Dr. Heberden, Dr. Warren, nor Dr. Butter, would accept any fees) had attended him, ſignified a wiſh, that his body might be opened. This was done, and the report made was to this effect:

Two of the valves of the aorta oſſified.

The air-cells of the lungs unuſually diſtended.

One of the kidneys deſtroyed by the preſſure of the water.

The liver ſchirrous.

A ſtone in the gall-bladder, of the ſize of a common gooſeberry.

On Monday the 20th of December, his funeral was celebrated and honoured by a numerous attendance of his friends, and among them, by particular invitation, of as many of the literary club as were then in town, and not prevented by engagements. The dean of Weſtminſter, upon my application, would gladly

gladly have performed the ceremony of his interment, but, at the time, was much indiſpoſed in his health; the office, therefore, devolved upon the ſenior prebendary, Dr. Taylor, who performed it with becoming gravity and ſerioufneſs. All the prebendaries, except ſuch as were abſent in the country, attended in their ſurplices and hoods: they met the corpſe at the weſt door of their church, and performed, in the moſt reſpectful manner, all the honours due to the memory of ſo great a man.

His body, encloſed in a leaden coffin, is depoſited in the ſouth tranſept of the abbey, near the foot of Shakeſpeare's monument, and cloſe to the coffin of his friend Garrick. Agreeable to his requeſt, a ſtone of black marble covers his grave, thus inſcribed:

SAMUEL JOHNSON, L. L. D.
Obiit XIII die Decembris,
Anno Domini
MDCCLXXXIV,
Ætatis ſuæ LXXV.

Copy of Dr. JOHNSON's WILL, and of the CODICIL thereto ſubjoined.

In the name of God. Amen. I SAMUEL JOHNSON, being in full poſſeſſion of my faculties, but fearing this night may put an end to my life, do ordain this my laſt will and teſtament. I bequeath to God a ſoul polluted with many ſins, but I hope purified by repentance, and I truſt redeemed by Jeſus Chriſt *. I leave ſeven hundred and fifty pounds in the hands of Bennet Langton, Eſq; three hundred pounds in the hands of Mr. Barclay and Mr. Perkins,

* This declaration is, in ſubſtance, the ſame with that in the former will, but varies in the expreſſion.

brewers;

brewers; one hundred and fifty pounds in the hands of Dr. Percy, biſhop of Dromore; one thouſand pounds, three per cent. annuities in the public funds; and one hundred pounds now lying by me in ready money; all theſe before-mentioned ſums and property I leave, I ſay, to Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, of Doctors Commons, in truſt for the following uſes; That is to ſay, to pay to the repreſentatives of the late William Innys, bookſeller, in St. Paul's Church Yard, the ſum of two hundred pounds; to Mrs. White, my female ſervant, one hundred pounds ſtock in the three per cent. annuities aforeſaid. The reſt of the aforeſaid ſums of money and property, together with my books, plate, and houſhold-furniture, I leave to the before-mentioned Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, alſo in truſt, to be applied, after paying my debts, to the uſe of Francis Barber, my man-ſervant, a negro, in ſuch manner as they ſhall judge moſt fit and available to his benefit. And I appoint the aforeſaid Sir Joſhua Reynolds, Sir John Hawkins, and Dr. William Scott, ſole executors of this my laſt will and teſtament, hereby revoking all former wills and teſtaments whatſoever. In witneſs whereof I hereunto ſubſcribe my name, and affix my ſeal, this eighth day of December, 1784.

SAM. JOHNSON, (L. S.)

Signed, ſealed, publiſhed, declared, and delivered by the ſaid teſtator, as his laſt will and teſtament, in the preſence of us, the word *two* being firſt inſerted in the oppoſite page.

GEORGE STRAHAN.
JOHN DES MOULINS.

By

By way of codicil to my laſt will and teſtament, I SAMUEL JOHNSON, give, deviſe, and bequeath, my meſſuage or tenement, ſituate at Lichfield, in the county of Stafford, with the appurtenances, in the tenure or occupation of Mrs. Bond, of Lichfield aforeſaid, or of Mr. Hinchman, her under-tenant, to my executors in trúſt, to ſell and diſpoſe of the ſame; and the money ariſing from ſuch ſale I give and bequeath as follows, viz. to Thomas and Benjamin the ſons of Fiſher Johnſon, late of Leiceſter, and Whiting, daughter of Thomas Johnſon, late of Coventry, and the grand daughter of the ſaid Thomas Johnſon, one full and equal fourth part each; but in caſe there ſhall be more grand-daughters than one of the ſaid Thomas Johnſon, living at the time of my deceaſe, I give and bequeath the part or ſhare of that one to, and equally between ſuch grand-daughters. I give and bequeath to the Rev. Mr. Rogers, of Berkley, near Froome, in the county of Somerſet, the ſum of one hundred pounds, requeſting him to apply the ſame towards the maintenance of Elizabeth Herne, a lunatic. I alſo give and bequeath to my god-children, the ſon and daughter of Mauritius Low, painter, each of them, one hundred pounds of my ſtock in the three per cent. conſolidated annuities, to be applied and diſpoſed of by and at the diſcretion of my Executors, in the education or ſettlement in the world of them my ſaid legatees. Alſo, I give and bequeath to Sir John Hawkins, one of my Executors, the Annales Eccleſiaſtici of Baronius and Holingſhed's and Stowe's Chronicles, and alſo an octavo Common Prayer Book. To Bennet Langton, Eſq; I give and bequeath my Polyglot Bible.

To Sir Joſhua Reynolds, my great French Dictionary, by Martiniere, and my own copy of my folio Engliſh Dictionary, of the laſt reviſion. To Dr. William Scott, one of my Executors, the Dictionnaire de Commerce, and Lectius's edition of the Greek Poets. To Mr. Windham, Poetæ Græci Heroici per Henricum Stephanum. To the Rev. Mr. Strahan, vicar of Iſlington, in Middleſex, Mills's Greek Teſtament, Beza's Greek Teſtament by Stephens, all my Latin Bibles, and my Greek Bible by Wechelius. To Dr. Heberden, Dr. Brockleſby, Dr. Butter, and Mr. Cruikſhank the ſurgeon who attended me, Mr. Holder my apothecary, Gerard Hamilton, Eſq; Mrs. Gardiner, of Snow-hill, Mrs. Frances Reynolds, Mr. Hoole, and the Rev. Mr. Hoole, his ſon, each a book at their election, to keep as a token of remembrance. I alſo give and bequeath to Mr. John des Moulins, two hundred pounds conſolidated three per cent. annuities; and to Mr. Saſtres, the Italian maſter, the ſum of five pounds, to be laid out in books of piety for his own uſe. And whereas the ſaid Bennet Langton hath agreed, in conſideration of the ſum of ſeven hundred and fifty pounds, mentioned in my will to be in his hands, to grant and ſecure an annuity of ſeventy pounds, payable during the life of me and my ſervant Francis Barber, and the life of the ſurvivor of us, to Mr. George Stubbs in truſt for us; my mind and will is, that in caſe of my deceaſe before the ſaid agreement ſhall be perfected, the ſaid ſum of ſeven hundred and fifty pounds, and the bond for ſecuring the ſaid ſum, ſhall go to the ſaid Francis Barber; and I hereby give and bequeath to him the ſame, in lieu of the bequeſt in his favour, contained in my ſaid will.

And

And I hereby empower my Executors to deduct and retain all expences that ſhall or may be incurred in the execution of my ſaid will, or of this codicil thereto, out of ſuch eſtate and effects as I ſhall die poſſeſſed of. All the reſt, reſidue, and remainder of my eſtate and effects, I give and bequeath to my ſaid Executors, in truſt for the ſaid Francis Barber, his Executors and Adminiſtrators. Witneſs my hand and ſeal this ninth day of December, 1784.'

SAM. JOHNSON, (L. S.)

Signed, ſealed, publiſhed, declared, and delivered by the ſaid Samuel Johnſon, as, and for a Codicil to his laſt Will and Teſtament, in the preſence of us, who, in his preſence, and at his requeſt, and alſo in the preſence of each other, have hereto ſubſcribed our names as witneſſes.

JOHN COPLEY.
WILLIAM GIBSON.
HENRY COLE.

POSTSCRIPT.

THE foregoing inſtrument carries into effect the reſolution of Dr. Johnſon, to be, with reſpect to his negro-ſervant, *nobiliſſimus*; but the many laviſh encomiums that have been beſtowed on this act of bounty, make it neceſſary to mention ſome particulars, ſubſequent to his death, that will ſerve to ſhew the ſhort-ſightedneſs of human wiſdom, and the effects of ill-directed benevolence.

The amount of the bequeſt to this man, may be eſtimated at a ſum little ſhort of 1500l. and that to the teſtator's relations named in the will at 235l. (the ſum which the houſe at Lichfield produced at a ſale by auction) who, being five in number, divided the ſame, after deducting the expences of the ſale, in the following proportions; that is to ſay, three of the relations took 58l. 15s. 0d. each, and each of two others, the repreſentatives of a fourth, 29l. 7s. 6d.

A few days after the doctor's deceaſe, Francis came to me, and informed me, that a relation of his maſter's, named Humphrey Heely, who, with his wife, had lately, upon the requeſt of the doctor to the biſhop of Rocheſter, been placed in an alms-houſe at Weſtminſter, was in great neceſſity, as wanting money to buy bedding and cloaths. I told him, that ſeeing he was ſo great a gainer by his maſter's will, as to be poſſeſſed of almoſt the whole of his fortune, it behoved him to have compaſſion on this his relation, and to ſupply his wants. His reply was,—'*I cannot afford it.*'

From

From the time of the doctor's deceaſe, myſelf, and my colleagues the other executors, anſwered all the calls of Francis for money. On the 6th day of September 1785, we had advanced him 106l. By the 13th of December following, he had received of Mr. Langton for his annuity, and of Meſſ. Barclay and Perkins for intereſt, as much as made that ſum 183l. and on the 15th of the ſame month, a year and two days after his maſter's death, he came to me, ſaying, that he wanted more money, for that a few halfpence was all that he had left. Upon my ſettling with him in Auguſt laſt, it appeared that, excluſive of his annuity, he had received 337l. and, after delivering to him the bond for 150l. mentioned in the will *, I paid him a balance of 196l. 15s. 4d. ½.

I had no ſooner cloſed my account, than I ſent for Heely, who appeared to be an old man and lame, having one leg much ſhorter than the other, but of an excellent underſtanding. The ſtyle of his diſcourſe was ſo correct and grammatical, that it called to my remembrance that of Johnſon. The account he gave me of himſelf and his fortunes was to the following effect:

That he was born in the year 1714, and that his relation to Johnſon was by marriage, his firſt wife being a Ford, and the daughter of Johnſon's mother's brother.——That himſelf had been a wholeſale ironmonger, and the owner of an eſtate in Warwickſhire, which he farmed himſelf, but that loſſes, and ſome indiſcretions on his part, had driven him to Scotland; and that, in his return on foot, with his wife, from

* He had before received 45l. for intereſt thereon.

Newcaſtle,

Newcaſtle, ſhe died on the road in his arms;—that, ſome years after, he was, by Sir Thomas Robinſon, made keeper of the Tap at Ranelagh houſe, and that he married again; but that not being able to endure the capricious inſolence with which he was treated, Mr. Garrick took him under his protection, and would have found a place for him in his theatre, but lived not to be able to do it; and that theſe, and other misfortunes and diſappointments, had brought him to the condition, as he deſcribed it, of a poor, reduced old man.——He added, that Dr. Johnſon had been very liberal to him; and, as one inſtance of his kindneſs, mentioned, that, about three weeks before his deceaſe, he had applied to him for aſſiſtance; and, upon ſtating his reaſons for troubling him, was bid, rather harſhly, to be ſilent;—'For,' ſaid the doctor, 'it is enough to ſay that you are in want; I enquire 'not into the cauſes of it: here is money for your 'relief*:'—but that, immediately recollecting himſelf, he

* We have here an inſtance of that aſperity of temper with which Johnſon has been frequently charged, but without any allowance for natural infirmity, or any conſideration of his endeavours to correct it, or his readineſs to atone for the pain it might ſometimes give, by a kind and gentle treatment of the perſon offended. The truth of the matter is, that his whole life was a conflict with his paſſions and humours, and that few perſons bore reprehenſion with more patience than himſelf. After his deceaſe, I found among his papers an anonymous letter, that ſeemed to have been written by a perſon who had long had his eye on him, and remarked the offenſive particulars in his behaviour, his propenſity to contradiction, his want of deference to the opinions of others, his contention for victory over thoſe with whom he diſputed, his local prejudices and averſions, and other his evil habits in converſation, which made his acquaintance ſhunned by many, who, as a man of genius

he changed his tone, and mildly ſaid,—'If I have ſpo-
'ken roughly to you, impute it to the diſtraction of my
'mind, and the petulance of a ſick man.'——De-
ſcribing his preſent condition, he ſaid, that he and his
wife were in want of every neceſſary, and that neither
of them had a change of any one article of raiment.

To be better informed of his circumſtances, I vi-
ſited this perſon in the alms-houſe, and was there a
witneſs to ſuch a ſcene of diſtreſs as I had never till
then beheld. A ſorry bed, with ſcarce any covering
on it, two or three old trunks and boxes, a few broken
chairs, and an old table, were all the furniture of the
room. I found him ſmoking, and, while I was talking
with him, a ragged boy, about ten years of age, came
in from the garden, and upon my enquiring who he
was, the old man ſaid—'This is a child whom a
'worthleſs father has left on our hands: I took him
'to keep at four ſhillings a week, and for four years
'maintenance have not been able to get more than
'five pounds four ſhillings: the poor child is an
'idiot, he cannot repeat the Lord's Prayer, and is
'unable to count five: we know not how to diſpoſe
'of him, and, if we did, we could hardly prevail on

genius and worth, highly eſteemed him. It was written with great temper, in a ſpirit of charity, and with a due acknowledgment of thoſe great talents with which he was endowed, but contained in it ſeveral home truths. In ſhort, it was ſuch a letter as many a one on the receipt of it would have deſtroyed. On the contrary, Johnſon preſerved it, and placed it in his bureau, in a ſituation ſo obvious, that, whenever he opened that repoſitory of his papers, it might look him in the face; and I have not the leaſt doubt, that he frequently peruſed and reflected on its contents, and endeavoured to correct his behaviour by an addreſs which he could not but conſider as a friendly admonition.

'ourſelves

'ourſelves to part with him; for it is a harmleſs, 'loving creature: we divide our morſel with him, 'and are juſt able to keep him from ſtarving.'

Upon enquiring into the means of this poor man's ſubſiſtence, he informed me, that the endowment of the alms-houſes, in one of which he lived, yielded him an allowance of half a crown a week, and half a chaldron of coals at Chriſtmas. That his wife bought milk and ſold it again, and thereby was able to get about a ſhilling a day. The ſcantineſs of his income, he ſaid, had obliged him and his wife to ſtudy the art of cheap living, and he felicitated himſelf that they were become ſuch proficients therein, as to be able to abſtain from drinking, except at their ſupper meal, when, as he ſaid, they each indulged in a pint of beer, which ſufficed them for four and twenty hours. He told me all this in a tremulous tone of voice that indicated a mind that had long ſtruggled with affliction, but without the leaſt murmur at his hard fortune, or complaint of the doctor's neglect of him: in ſhort, he appeared to me ſuch an example of meekneſs and patience in adverſity, as the beſt of men, in ſimilar circumſtances, might wiſh to imitate.

Johnſon had alſo a firſt couſin, Elizabeth Herne, a lunatic, whom, upon her diſcharge from Bethlem hoſpital as incurable, he had placed in a mad-houſe at Bethnal green. A lady of the name of Prowſe, had bequeathed to her an annuity of 10l. and Johnſon conſtantly paid the bills for her keeping, which, amounting to 25l. a year, ma[illegible]n a benefactor to her of the difference between [illegible]e two ſums.

The

The doctor, by his will, bequeathed to the reverend Mr. Rogers, who had married the daughter of Mrs. Prowſe, 100l. towards the maintenance of the lunatic; but he, probably conſidering that the intereſt of that ſum would fall far ſhort of what Johnſon had been uſed to contribute, and that the burthen of ſupporting her would lie on himſelf, renounced the legacy. Had the doctor left her, for her life, the dividends of 500l. part of his ſtock, ſhe had ſuſtained no loſs at his death: as the matter now ſtands, I muſt apply the 100l. for her maintenance, and, if ſhe lives to exhauſt it, muſt ſeek out the place of her laſt legal ſettlement, and remit her to the care of a pariſh *.

That the name of the poor man Heely occurs not in the will, and that no better a proviſion is therein made for the lunatic Herne, than a legacy which may fail to ſupport her through life, can no otherwiſe be accounted for, than by the doctor's poſtponing that laſt ſolemn act of his life, and his making a diſpoſition of what he had to leave, under circumſtances that diſabled him from recollecting either their rela-

* Of the craft and ſelfiſhneſs of the doctor's negro-ſervant, the following is a notable inſtance. At the time of his maſter's death, Mrs. Herne's maintenance was about 30l. in arrear. I was applied to for the money, and ſhewed the bill to him, upon which he immediately went to the mad-houſe, and endeavoured to prevail on the keeper thereof to charge it on the legacy; but he refuſed to do it, ſaying, that the lunatic was placed there by Dr. Johnſon, and that it was a debt incurred in his life-time, and, by conſequence, was payable out of his effects. When this would not do, this artful fellow came to me, and pretended that he could bring a woman to ſwear that there was nothing due; and, upon my telling him, that I ſhould, notwithſtanding, pay the bill, he ſaid, he ſaw there was no good intended for him, and in anger left me.

tion to him, or the diſtreſſes they ſeverally laboured under. Any other ſuppoſition would be injurious to the memory of a man, who, by his private memoranda in my poſſeſſion, appears to have applied near a fourth part of his income in acts of beneficence.

The above facts are ſo connected with the tranſactions of Dr. Johnſon in the latter days of his life, that they are part of his hiſtory; and the mention of them may ſerve as a caveat againſt oſtentatious bounty, favour to negroes, and teſtamentary diſpoſitions *in extremis*.

*** It will afford ſome ſatisfaction to the compaſſionate reader to know, that the means of benefiting Heely, and ſome others of Dr. Johnſon's relations, whom he had either totally neglected, or ſlightly noticed, have been found out and rendered practicable by Mr. Langton. That gentleman, to whom the doctor had given his manuſcript Latin poems, having got for them of the booksellers 20l. with that benignity which is but one of his excellent qualities, had determined to divide the ſame among the doctor's relations. And whereas the doctor died indebted to the eſtate of the late Mr. Beauclerk, in the ſum of 30l. lady Diana Beauclerk, his relict and executrix, upon the receipt thereof, and being informed of Mr. Langton's intention, in a ſpirit of true benevolence requeſted, that ſhe might be permitted to add that ſum to the former, and, accordingly, depoſited it in his hands. Part of this money has been applied in relieving the wants of Heely and his wife, and the reſt will be diſpoſed of among thoſe relations that ſhall appear to ſtand moſt in need of help; and, as a farther relief to Heely, and for the benefit of the idiot-boy, meaſures are taking to compel the father to maintain him, and eventually to ſettle him with the pariſh, upon which he has ultimately a legal claim for relief and maintenance.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

INDEX.

A.

PAGE.

Abiſſinia, account of the Portugueſe miſſion to — — 23
Act for licenſing plays, the occaſion thereof — 74
Adventurer, hiſtory of that publication — — 292
Advertiſement, a ſpirited one, reſpecting the Idler — 377
Ædudæ, ſee *Hebrides*.
Ainſworth, Michael, note of him — — 254
Akenſide, Dr. Mark, anecdotes of him — — 242
— challenges *Ballow*, a lawyer — — 245
— account of a day ſpent with him in the country — 247
Amburſt, (editor of the Craftſman) memoirs of him — 157
Annet, anecdote of his inveterate hatred of the holy ſcriptures — — — — — 566
Arches, obſervations on the controverſy on the ſtrength of 372
Aſton, Molly, Johnſon's epigram on — — 316
Authors, by profeſſion, characterized — — 27
— proſtitution in, what — — — 81
— the various kinds of — — — — 205
— Johnſon's ſentiments on — — — 268
— inſtances of generoſity of bookſellers to — — 344
— the frequent contrariety between their lives and writings 410

B.

Bailey's Dictionary, the foundation of Johnſon's — — 175
Ballow, Mr. a lawyer, anecdotes of him — — 244
— affronts Dr. Akenſide and is challenged by him, but declines a meeting — — — — 245
Baret, John, the preface to his dictionary of four languages 172
Barker, Dr. Edmund, account of him — — 233
Barnard, Sir John, his elocution deſcribed — — 96
Bathurſt, Dr. Richard, his hiſtory — — — 234
Beauclerk, Topham, Eſq; account of him — — 421
— *Lady Diana*, his relict, her benevolence to the neglected relations of Johnſon — — — 602
Bell, Mrs. Johnſon's epitaph on her — — — 472
Birch, Dr. Thomas, account of him — — — 206
— account of a perambulation by him round London — 207
Blackfriars Bridge, obſervations on the architecture of — 374
Blackmore, Sir Richard, his contempt of calumny — 348

INDEX.

Page.

Blaney, Elizabeth, inſcription to her memory, by Johnſon's father — — — 4
Booksellers, inſtances of their generoſity to authors — 344
Boſwell, Mr. James, accompanies Dr. Johnſon to the Hebrides 472
Boyſe, Samuel, a diſtreſſed poet, account of him — 158
Breakfaſts of perſons of quality before the introduction of tea 352
Brett, Dr. Thomas, his ſentiments of prayer for the dead — 448
Brocklesby, Dr. his generous offer to Johnſon — — 573
Brooke, Mr. Henry, account of his tragedy of Guſtavus Vaſa 76

C.

Camden, (the antiquary) ſtory of the mutilation of his monument in Weſtminſter Abbey — — — 519
Campbell, (the architect) — — — 373
Campbell, Dr. John, account of him — — — 210
Canton, Mr. John, a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine 48
Catalogue of the Harleian Library, extracts from — — 134
Cave, Edward, (the printer) account of him — — 40
— his correſpondents — — — *ibid.*
Chamier, Anthony, Eſq; account of him — — 422
Cheſterfield, Earl of, his ſpeech on the act for licenſing the retailing of ſpirituous liquors — — 113
— his character as a ſpeaker — — — 121
— pretends to patronize Johnſon's Dictionary — — 175
— his interview with Johnſon — — — 176
— ſurvey of his character — — — 177
— ſtory of his attempt on a married lady of quality — 180
— the immoral tendency of his letters to his ſon examined 181
— his letters contraſted with a letter of Sir Henry Sidney's to his ſon Philip — — — 185
— Johnſon's character of him — — — 189
— his deſcription of Johnſon — — — 190
Chriſtian, a complete one defined, by Howell — — 542
Clarke, Dr. Samuel, his definition of virtue — — 254
Cock-lane Ghoſt, account of the — — — 436
Columns, the proportions of — — 375
Contraband trader characterized — — — 468
Cooper, Biſhop of Lincoln, note reſpecting his dictionary — 171
Coram, Captain, his noble reply to an offer of aſſiſtance — 573
Corbet, Mr. Andrew, ſends Johnſon with his ſon to Pembroke College, Oxford — —— — 9
Cornelys, Mrs. the ſuperintendant of our public diverſions — 262
— is baniſhed the cities of Turin and Bruſſels — — *ibid.*
Courts of Juſtice, their tenderneſs to priſoners — — 522
Craftſman, character of that paper — — — 60
Creditor, mercileſs, a character now hardly known in England 523
Crichton, James, ſurnamed the *Admirable*, account of him and his exploits — — — 294
Croſaz, character of him and his writings — — 65

D. Dead,

INDEX.

D.

PAGE.

Dead, praying for them a conſtant uſage in the primitive church — — — — — 449
Dictionaries, account of the old Engliſh — — 171
Diverſions, the inceſſant round of them in London — 262
Dixie, Sir Wolſtan, his treatment of Johnſon — — 20
Dod (the decalogiſt) anecdote of him — — 541
Dodd, Dr. William, account of him — — 434
— further account of him and his forgery — — 520
— his petition to the king for pardon, written by Dr. Johnſon — — — — 524
— Mrs. Dodd's, to the queen — — 526
— motives for mercy in his caſe aſſigned by Johnſon — 527
Dodington, Bubb, Lord Melcombe, ſeeks the friendſhip of Johnſon — — — — 329
— account of his favourites and dependants — — *ibid.*
— note on his diary — — — — 330
Douglas, Dr. John, detects Lauder of accuſing Milton falſely of plagiariſm — — — — 276
— extracts from Lauder's conceſſion — — *ibid.*
Duck, epitaph on a, written by Johnſon when only three years of age — — — — 6
Ducket, his atheiſtical letter — — — 334
Duick, Mr. John, a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine 47
Dyer, Mr. Samuel, character and memoirs of — 222 *et ſeqq.*
Dyſon, Jer. Eſq; particulars reſpecting him — — 243

E.

Eames, Mr. John, account of his academy — 48
Editha, the wife of Edward the Confeſſor, ſtory of her meeting with Ingulphus when a boy, and examining him as to his progreſs in learning — — — 470
Egmont, Lord, author of "Faction detected" — — 85
Emigration, its legal conſequences — — — 496

F.

Falkland Iſlands, the diſpute concerning them — — 464
— characterized by Johnſon — — — 466
— advantages and diſadvantages of — — — 467
Falſe Alarm, account of that pamphlet — — 501
Felons, the tenderneſs with which they are now treated — 521
— chances in favour of their eſcaping juſtice multifold — 522
Fielding, Henry, character of him and his works — — 214
Fleetwood, anecdote of a converſation between him and Mr. Garrick — — — — 55
Foote, Samuel, deterred by Johnſon from his deſign of ridiculing him on the ſtage — — — 438
Ford, Parſon, ſhort account of — — — 2
— ſuppoſed to be the parſon intended in Hogarth's Modern Midnight Converſation — —

Page.

Fothergill, Dr. John, account of him — — — 242
Fournier, story of his forgery on Bishop Hoadly — 412
Free-Masons, a mock procession in ridicule of — — 335

G.

Garrick, Mr. placed in his youth under the tuition of Johnson 35
— comes to London with Johnson, — — 39
— acts a part in the Mock Doctor with some journeymen printers, before Cave at his house — — 45
— anecdote of him and Fleetwood — — 55
— purchases Drury-lane theatre, in conjunction with Lacy 194
— lines by him on the publication of Johnson's Dictionary 343
— his notion of the importance of his profession — — 427
— his conduct in a chancery-suit — — 428
— his pleasantry — — — 431
— his liberality — — — — *ibid.*
— his reformation of the stage — — — 433
— his arts to ensure the favour of the public — — 433
General Warrants, a good use of them — — 508
Gentleman's Magazine, the origin and progress of — 29
— account of some of the early contributors to it — 46
— Johnson undertakes a biographical article in it — — 89
— contest between it and the London Magazine — 92
— parliamentary speeches therein, first published in July 1736, under the direction of Guthrie — — 95
— Johnson undertakes to write the debates — — 96
— the sale greatly increased thereby — — 123
— Johnson continues the debates to the end of 1743 — 132
— the debates continued by Hawkesworth, to 1760 — *ibid.*
— review of books, by Owen Ruffhead, continued by Hawkesworth — — — *ibid.*
— note of several pieces in it, written by Johnson — 350
George II. *King*, an elegant compliment of his to the wife of Mr. Thornton — — — 460
Gibbs, (the architect) — — — 373
Glasgow, account of the voyage of an inhabitant of St. Kilda to — — — — 477
Goldsmith, Dr. Oliver, anecdotes of him — — — 416
— relation of some of his absurdities, and of a trick played upon him by Roubiliac the sculptor — — 417
— slighted the patronage of the Duke of Northumberland 419
Good-breeding a favourite quality with Johnson — 407
Goodman's Fields Theatre, history of its erection and suppression 73
Grenville, Mr. characterized — — — 514
Grub-street Journal, origin and progress of — — 31
Grub-street writers and politicians, why so called *ibid.*
Gustavus Vasa, written by Mr. Brooke — — 72
— passages in it — — — — 73
Guthrie compiles the parliamentary speeches in the Gentleman's Magazine — — — — 95

INDEX.

H.

PAGE

Hall, Biſhop, character of his Virgidemiarum — — 169
Hanway, Mr. Jonas, his controverſy with Dr. Johnſon 351
Hardwicke, Lord, his ſpeech on a motion for addreſſing the king to remove Sir R. Walpole — — 101
Hawkeſworth, Dr. undertakes the debates in the Gentleman's Magazine 1744, and continues them to 1760 132
— undertakes alſo the review of books — — *ibid.*
— character of him — — — 220, 252
— hiſtory of the Adventurer — — — 292
— created doctor of laws, by the archbiſhop of Canterbury 311
Hawkſmoor, (the architect) — — — 373
Hebrides, account of Johnſon's journey thither — 472 *et ſeqq.*
Heely, Humphrey, (a relation of Dr. Johnſon) account of him 597
Hill, Dr. John, account of him and his works — — 211
Hiſtorical Regiſter, publiſhed 1716, the origin of that work 30
Hoadly, Biſhop, remarkable inſtance of his ſagacity — 412
Hoadly, Dr. (the phyſician) anecdotes of him — — 237
Hodges, Dr. his hard fate — — — 51
Hogarth, note concerning his print of the times — 500
Hooker, his opinion of legiſlation — — 85
Howell, his definition of a complete chriſtian — — 542
— his own eſtimate of his charity towards ſectaries — *ibid.*

J.

James, (the architect) — — — 373
Idler, the paper ſo called, origin and progreſs of — — 363
Inſanity, Johnſon's dread of — — — 378
Johnſon, Michael, (father of Dr. Samuel) inſcribes a ſtone in memory of a young woman who died for love of him 4
Johnſon, Dr. Samuel, his general character — — 1
— born at Lichfield, September 7, 1709 — — 3
— is touched by Queen Anne for the evil — — 4
— his firſt poetry at three years old, an epitaph on a duck — 6
— placed in the free-ſchool at Lichfield — — *ibid.*
— predicted by Mr. Butt to become a great man — *ibid.*
— character whilſt at ſchool, by a ſchool-fellow — — 7
— for ſome time under his uncle, Cornelius Ford — 8
— removed to Stourbridge-ſchool — — — *ibid.*
— engaged by Mr. Andrew Corbet, to aſſiſt his ſon in his ſtudies at Oxford — — — 9
— entered commoner there — — — *ibid.*
— his contempt for Jordan, his tutor — — *ibid.*
— his diſtreſs at college — — — — 11
— becomes pupil to Mr. Adams — — — *ibid.*
— for a taſk tranſlates Pope's Meſſiah into Latin, which is greatly approved of by Pope — — — 13
— inclined to the practice of the civil or common law, but prevented by his father's inability to ſupport him in a courſe of ſtudy — — — — 14

INDEX.

Page.

Johnſon, Dr. Samuel, compared with Magliabechi — 16
— his retentive memory — — — — 17
— leaves the univerſity, and returns to his father — — 19
— his reverence for religion — — — *ibid.*
— loſes his father — — — 20
— uſher at Market-Bofworth free-ſchool — — *ibid.*
— reſides at Birmingham, where he tranſlates Lobo's voyage to Abiſſinia — — — 21
— returns to Lichfield — — — 26
— gives out propoſals for publiſhing Politian's Poems, but drops his deſign — — — *ibid.*
— reſolves to become a writer for the bookſellers — 27
— his firſt letter to Cave — — — 28
— retained by Cave as a correſpondent — — 29
— offers himſelf as uſher to a ſchool at Brerewood, Staffordſhire, but rejected — — — 32
— marries the relict of Mr. Porter, a mercer at Birmingham 33
— his character of Gilbert Walmſley — — 34
— becomes a teacher of literature at Lichfield — 35
— Garrick is placed under his tuition — — *ibid.*
— his plan of inſtruction — — — 37
— leaves Lichfield, and comes to town with Garrick — 38
— writes his tragedy of Irene — — — 40
— ſtory of the tragedy — — — — 41
— his letter to Cave, propoſing a tranſlation of Father Paul's Hiſtory of the Council of Trent — — 44
— becomes acquainted with Savage — — 52
— tranſlates the iiid. Satire of Juvenal — — 56
— two letters to Cave on the tranſlation — — 57, 59
— ſells the copy to Dodſley — — 60
— offers for the maſterſhip of Appleby ſchool — 63
— ſolicits from the univerſity of Dublin the degree of A. M. with Lord Gower's letter of recommendation — *ibid.*
— undertakes a tranſlation of Crouſaz's Examen of Pope's Eſſay on Man — — — 65
— letter to Cave on the tranſlation — — 66
— publiſhes the Marmor Norfolcienſe — — 70
— account of that pamphlet — — — 71
— warrant iſſued to apprehend the author — — 72
— defends Brooke's Guſtavus Vaſa — — 78
— his political prejudices — — — 80
— catalogue of publications projected by him — — 81
— his notion of the motives to writing — — 84
— wrote ſermons for clergymen — — *ibid.*
— his integrity in adhering to his religious and political principles — — — 85
— his ſentiments on legiſlation — — — 85
— his parting from Savage — — — *ibid.*
— his opinion of taverns — — — 87

INDEX.

PAGE.

Johnſon, Dr. Samuel, ſeparates from his wife, but they are ſoon reconciled — — — — 89
— undertakes a biographical article in the Gentleman's Magazine — — — — *ibid.*
— ode to Urban, Latin and Engliſh — — 90
— begins to write the parliamentary ſpeeches in the Gentleman's Magazine — — — 97
— his hatred of deceit — — — 123
— the various ſpeeches characterized — — 128
— aſſiſts in making the catalogue of Lord Oxford's books — 133
— writes the preface to the catalogue — — 145
— employed in ſelecting pieces for the Harleian Miſcellany 146
— copy of the propoſals — — — *ibid.*
— ſtory of his knocking down Oſborne — — 150
— writes the life of Savage — — 152
— remarks on that work — — — 153
— the author's intention in writing it — — 155
— commendation of the work by Henry Fielding — 156
— his courſe of ſtudy at the univerſity, deſultory — — 161
— his religious character — — — 162
— extract from his Annales — — — 163
— his moral character — — — 164
— his œconomical character — — — 165
— projects a new edition of Shakeſpeare — — 167
— engages in his Dictionary — — — 170
— his method of compiling it — — — 175
— Lord Cheſterfield pretends to patronize this work — *ibid.*
— his interview with his lordſhip — — — 176
— his character of Lord Cheſterfield — — 189
— deſcribed by Lord Cheſterfield — — 190
— writes the prologue on Garrick's firſt opening Drury Lane Theatre — — — — 194
— the prologue — — — — 196
— brings his tragedy of Irene on the ſtage — — 199
— character of that play — — — 200
— publiſhes a tranſlation of the xth Satire of Juvenal — 201
— aſſiſts the grand-daughter of Milton, and de Groot a deſcendant of Grotius — — — 203
— eſtabliſhes a Club in Ivy-lane — — — 219
— the names and characters of the members — — 220
— further account of the Ivy-lane Club — — 250
— a friend to the clergy in general, yet frequently rough to individuals — — — — 251
— his talent of humour — — — 258
— undertakes the Rambler — — — 259
— prayer compoſed by him upon that occaſion — — 265
— ſpecimens of his Adverſaria — — — 266
— his ſentiments of writers for hire — — — 268

INDEX.

Page

Johnſon, Dr. Samuel, owed his excellence as a writer to the divines and others of the laſt century — — 271
— his talent for criticiſm — — — 274
— his hatred of Milton — — — — 275
— his melancholy turn of mind — — 287
— concludes the Rambler abruptly — — 289
— wrote the Adventurers ſigned T — — 293
— loſes his wife — — — 313
— character of her — — — *ibid.*
— epitaph on her — — — 315
— becomes melancholy on her death — — 316
— his notion of the ſtate of departed ſpirits — — 317
— his inſenſibility to the beauties of painting, and the delights of muſic — — 318, 319
— his friendſhip for Anna Williams — — 321
— his ſlovenly dreſs — — — — 327
— *Mr.* Dodington ſeeks his friendſhip — — 329
— prudently declines it — — — 340
— completes his Dictionary — — *ibid.*
— his arch reply to Andrew Millar — — 341
— obtains from the univerſity of Oxford the degree of A. M. *ibid.*
— his letter of thanks to the Vice-Chancellor thereon — 342
— note of ſeveral things written by him in the Gentleman's Magazine, and other periodical publications — 350
— account of his controverſy with Jonas Hanway — 351
— his behaviour at meals — — — 354
— Ivy-lane Club broke up — — — 300
— undertakes his edition of Shakeſpeare — — *ibid.*
— publiſhes the Idler — — — 363
— is offered a valuable living, but objects to taking orders 364
— his ſentiments reſpecting the clergy — — 365
— loſes his mother — — — *ibid.*
— writes an Idler on her death — — 366
— obſervations on Raſſelas — — — 367
— engages in a controverſy on the ſtrength of arches — 378
— concludes the Idler — — — 379
— the Idler characterized — — — 380
— his facility in compoſition — — — 381
— his reflections on a pudding — — — 388
— his talent of burleſque verification — — 389
— his favourable ſentiments of women — — 390
— various prefaces and dedications written by him — 391
— a penſion ſettled on him by his preſent majeſty — 392
— a dabbler in phyſic — — — 395
— takes Robert Levett, a practiſer of phyſic, into his houſe 396
— patronizes a dancing-maſter — — — 404
— a lover of penitents and ſuch as made profeſſions of piety — — — — 406
— an admirer of well-bred men — — — 407

INDEX.

PAGE.

Johnſon, Dr. Samuel, the ingratitude of his dependants — 408
— exerciſes himſelf in chemical proceſſes — — 414
— eſtabliſhes a weekly club at the Turk's Head, Gerard-ſtreet 415
— — account of the members — — 416 & *ſeqq.*
— objects to admitting Garrick a member thereof — 425
— his friendſhip with Garrick not cordial — — *ibid.*
— becomes indolent and torpid — — — 435
— aſſiſts in detecting the impoſture of the Cock-lane Ghoſt 436
— adventure on the ſtage at Lichfield — — 439
— publiſhes Shakeſpeare — — — 441
— created LL. D. by the univerſity of Dublin — 445
— extracts from his Diary of Good Reſolutions — — 447
— the publication of his prayers defended — — 451
— commencement of his friendſhip with Mr. Thrale — 454
— is honoured by the king with a converſation — — 459
— appointed profeſſor of ancient literature to the academy of painting, &c. — — — 461
— publiſhes his firſt political pamphlet, "The Falſe Alarm" *ibid.*
— publiſhes his pamphlet of "Falkland's Iſlands" — 464
— his general knowledge — — — 469
— took great pleaſure in appoſing or examining children — 470
— his epitaph on Mrs. Bell — — — 472
— his journey to the Hebrides — — — *ibid.*
— his opinion of the poems of Oſſian — — 488
— his indignant anſwer to Macpherſon's letter — 491
— his oak ſtaff deſcribed — — — *ibid.*
— publiſhes a new edition of Shakeſpeare in conjunction with Mr. Steevens — — — 492
— publiſhes "The Patriot" — — — *ibid.*
— publiſhes "Taxation no Tyranny" — — 494
— his thoughts on the conſtitution — — — 505
— Mr. Thrale purpoſes to bring him into parliament — 511
— is ſoured at being diſappointed — — — 513
— his opinion of Mr. Grenville and Sir Robert Walpole 514
— created LL. D. by the univerſity of Oxford — — 515
— goes to Paris with Mr. Thrale and a party — — 516
— his readineſs to aſſiſt in writing prefaces, prologues, &c. for authors — — — — 517
— his prologue to "A Word to the Wiſe" — — 518
— the petition which he wrote for Dr. Dodd to the King, to obtain pardon — — — — 524
— ——— Mrs. Dodd's to the Queen — — 526
— motives urged by him in favour of Dodd — — 527
— writes "The Convict's Addreſs" — — 529
— writes the "Lives of the Poets" — — — 532
— his Lives of the Poets conſidered — — — 533
— character as a poet — — — — 538
— meditates a tranſlation of Thuanus — — 539
— begins to contemplate his diſſolution — — 540

PAGE.

Maittaire, Michael, writes the dedication to the Catalogue of Lord Oxford's books — — — 133
Mead, Dr. anecdotes of him — — — 236
— his rencounter with Dr. Woodward — — 245
Melcombe, Lord. See *Dodington.*
Millar, Andrew, Johnson's arch reply to — — 341
Milton, John, attacked by Lauder as a plagiarist — 275
— defended by Dr. Douglas — — — 276
— extracts from Lauder's concessions — — 277
— again attacked by Lauder — — — 281
Missale of St. Isidore, account of — — — 139
Mœurs, les, character of that work — — — 226

N.

Newbery, Mr. engages Johnson to write the Idler — 363
Newsham, the engine-maker, a story of him — — 93
Nicholls Dr. Frank, a saying of his — — — 407
Northumberland Household-Book, extract from — — 352
Novel-Writing, origin and progress of — — 213
Nugent, Dr. character of him — — — 416

O.

Oldys, Wm. account of him — — — 133
Osborne, Tho. purchases Lord Oxford's books, and employs Oldys and Johnson in making the catalogue of them 132
— specimen of the catalogue — — — 134
— character of him — — — — 149
— story of Johnson's knocking him down with a folio — 150
Ossian, Johnson's opinion of the poems of — — 488
Oxford, Lord, his library. See *Osborne.*

P.

Patriot described — — — — 492
— negatively described — — — 493
Pembroke and Montgomery, Philip Earl of, a strange character 135
Penn, William, story of him — — — 208
Pennant, Mr. commendation of his tour to the Hebrides, and of the concluding paragraph thereof — — 474, 487
Periodical Moral Essays, their utility — — 260
Physicians, numerous instances of the failure of their endeavours to acquire practice, with reflections thereon, 235 *et seq.*
— *the college of*, attacked by Dr. Schomberg — — 241
Pilgrimages, observations on — — — 369
Pitt, Mr. his speech in answer to Mr. Walpole's, on a bill for the encouragement of seamen — — 126
Political State of Great Britain, short account of that work 29
Pope, Mr. his opinion of Johnson's translation of the Messiah i[illegible] La[illegible] — — — 13
— [illegible] of genius — — *ibid.*

INDEX.

PAGE.

Pope, his Eſſay on Man, compoſed from the dictamen of Lord Bolingbroke — — — 67
— not converſant with the ancient writers on morality — *ibid.*
— commencement of his acquaintance with Warburton — 69
— an inſtance of his affected contempt of calumny — 347
Precedents in Law, their uſe — — — 531
Priſoners, the tenderneſs with which they are treated — 521
Prologues, their deſign — — — 194
Prologue, by Johnſon, for the opening of Drury Lane Theatre by Garrick — — — 196
— at the performance of Kelly's play for the benefit of his family — — — — 518
Prophecies, forged to ſerve political purpoſes — — 70
Proſtitution in authors, what — — — 81
Pſalmanaazar, George, account of him — — 546
Pudding, extempore reflection on a — — — 388
Puritans, Johnſon's opinion of — — — 541

Q.

Quaker, anecdote of a female one, who kept a houſe of lewd reſort — — — — 73
Quin, ſtory of him and Dr. Thompſon — — 338

R.

Ralph, Mr. James, account of him — — 161, 330
Rambler, prayer compoſed by Johnſon, when he firſt undertook it — — — — 265
— ſpecimen of hints from which he compoſed ſundry of the papers — — — — 266
— all except four written by himſelf — — 271
— tranſlated into the Ruſſian language — — 290
Raſſelas, Johnſon ſold the copy of it, in order to ſupport his mother in her laſt illneſs — — 366
— examen of that work — — — 367
Religious Exerciſes, thoughts on — — — 565
Remembrancer, a political paper written by Ralph — 330
Rich, Mr. an elegant compliment of his to Mr. Garrick — 432
Richardſon, particulars of him — — — 216
— compared with Johnſon — — — 384
Rider, the Rev. William, a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine — — — — — 48
Robinſon, Sir Thomas, is ſent by lord Cheſterfield to Johnſon with offers of friendſhip, which are rejected. Anecdotes of him — — — — 191
Romance-writing, modern, the origin and progreſs of — 213
Rota Club — — — — 374
Ruffhead, Owen, undertakes the review of books in the Gentleman's Magazine — — 132

S. *Salter*,

INDEX.

S.

Salter, Dr. Samuel, character of him — — PAGE 220
Savage, Richard, ſketch of his character — — 52
— his parting from Johnſon — — — 86
— Johnſon writes his life — — — 152
— the author's intention in writing it — — 155
— Henry Fielding's commendation of it — — 156
Saunders, Lord Chief Juſtice, hiſtory of his origin and riſe 14
Schomberg, Dr. Meyer, his hiſtory — — 239
School-Inſtruction, Dr. Johnſon's plan for — — 37
Secker, Archbiſhop of Canterbury, anecdotes of him — — 248
Selwin, Mr. ſtory of a perſon under ſentence of death applying to him to obtain a pardon — — — 523
Sentimental writers, characterized — — 218
Shafteſbury, Lord, his definition of virtue — — 253
— a ſuſpected infidel — — — 254
Shakeſpeare, his knowledge of the human mind illuſtrated, by a relation of an affray on the Thames — 443
— enquiry into the merits of the various editors of his works 168
Shiells, Mr. account of him, and his lives of the poets, publiſhed under the name of Cibber — — 204
Shippen, William, anecdote of him — — 515
Sidney, Sir Henry, his letter to his ſon Philip — — 185
Smalridge, Dr. his readineſs to viſit the ſick — — 365
Smith, Mr. John, a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine 48
Smollet, Dr. Tobias, account of him and his works — 215
Southwell, Mr. Edmund, anecdotes of him — — 405
Spelman's Gloſſary, account of that work — — 136
Spirituous Liquors, ſeven millions of gallons diſtilled yearly in England about the year 1740 — — 121
Sterne, Laurence, account of him and his writings — 218
Strutt, the attorney, an infidel, and a writer in the Craftſman — — — — — 332
Sun Fire-Office, the origin of the — — — 30
Symmetry, obſervations on — — — 376

T.

Taverns, Dr. Johnſon's love of, and reaſons for it — 87
— their antiquity and hiſtory — — — *ibid.*
Taylor, (the Water Poet) account of him and his works — 141
Taxation no Tyranny, account of that pamphlet — — 494
Tea, controverſy between Jonas Hanway and Dr. Johnſon on 351
— breakfaſts of perſons of quality before the introduction of it — — — — — 352
Thompſon, Dr. account of him — — — 337
— ſtory of Quin and him — — — 338
Thrale, Mr. dies, and leaves Johnſon one of his executors — 547
— his epitaph, written by Johnſon — — — 550

Thurlow,

INDEX.

PAGE.

Thurlow, Lord Chancellor, his generous offer to Johnſon of a ſum to enable him to travel for the recovery of his health — — — — 573

U. V.

Univerſal Viſitor, account of the writers of the — — 351
Urquhart, Sir Thomas, account of him — — 299
Vanbrugh (the architect) — — — 373
Virtue, the opinions of Lord Shafteſbury, Dr. Clarke, and Mr. Wollaſton, on — — — 253

W.

Walpole, Mr. Horatio, his ſpeech on a bill for the encouragement of ſeamen — — — 125
Walpole, Sir Robert, his conduct as a miniſter — — 130
— on his death-bed, predicted the rebellion of 1745 — 131
— characterized — — — — 514
Walmſley, Mr. Gilbert, his character — — — 34
— his letter to Mr. Colſon, in favour of Johnſon and Garrick — — — — 39
Warburton, Biſhop of Glouceſter, his riſe — — 68
— commencement of his acquaintance with Pope — 69
Watchmaking, the decline of that buſineſs — — 510
Watkins, Mr. many of his pupils writers in the Gentleman's Magazine — — — — 47
Webb, Mr. Foſter, a writer in the Gentleman's Magazine *ibid.*
Whitehead, Paul, anecdotes of him — — — 330
Williams, Anna, her hiſtory — — — 321
— prayer for her by Johnſon in her illneſs — — 558
— dies — — — — *ibid.*
Williams, Zachariah, her father, his hiſtory — — 321
Wills, the imprudence of deferring the making of them to the laſt hours of life, exemplified in Dr. Johnſon — 602
Wilſon, Dr. a phyſician and a humoriſt, account of him — 433
Wit by profeſſion, characterized — — — 457
Wollaſton, his definition of Virtue — — — 253
Woodward, Dr. his rencounter with Dr. Mead — — 245

Y.

Young, Dr. Edward, a client of Lord Melcombe — 329

ERRATA.

Page 134, line 4, for *raiſonée*, read *raiſonnée*.
—— 183, line 28, for *Metnor*, read *Mentor*.
—— 245, in the note, for *the way leading from the outer court*, read *leading from Broad ſtreet*.
—— 247, line antepenult. for *procure*, read *of procuring*.
—— 274, line 21, for *examplars*, read *exemplars*.
—— 406, line 4, for *or*, read *of*.
—— 486, line 20, for *Thompſon*, read *Thomſon*.
—— 600, line 21, for *examplar* read *exemplar*.

NEW YORK PUBLIC LIBRARY
REFERENCE DEPARTMENT

ook is under no circumstances to be
taken from the Building